RP to revive claim over disputed Mischief Reef

STORY ON PAGE A2

Sino jets intercept US Navy aircraft

WASHINGTON—A US Navy aircraft was damaged after it was intercepted by two Chinese fighter jets during a surveillance mission over the South China Sea and forced to make an emergency landing, the Navy said Sunday.

Around 9:15 a.m. yesterday, "a US Navy EP-3 maritime patrol aircraft on a routine surveillance mission over the South China Sea was

SINO/ A20

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2001 ★ 84 PAGES 7 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 115 ₱15

MILF no longer separatist–GMA

By Armand N. Nocum and Edwin O. Fernandez
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo said she had the "impression" that the Moro Islamic Liberation Front was no longer fighting for a separate Muslim state in Mindanao.

MILF/ A20

Quezon solon tagged in shabu trafficking

Whistle-blower alleges lawmaker protected drug ring

By Delfin T. Mallari
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Philip C. Tubeza

A FORMER associate of Quezon province's most powerful drug lord has accused Rep. Marcial Punzalan and other local government and police officials of involvement in drug trafficking.

Jonathan Perpiñan, 26, who turned himself in to authorities in Manila, identified the alleged drug lord as Atilano "Athel" Alcala.

He said Punzalan, Quezon police director Supt. Charlemagne Alejandrino and Lucena City Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr. had worked with Alcala to make the trade of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) in the province more efficient and profitable.

PUNZALAN: "All baseless and unfounded

In a cell phone interview, Punzalan burst into laughter when he heard the accusation being hurled against him.

"I don't even know him, much less his syndicate boss Athel Alcala," the lawmaker said.

Asked for his reaction, Alejandrino said, "I don't know any person named Jonathan, even Athel Alcala. I only know him by name since he is a notorious drug pusher. But I never had a chance to meet him in person."

But he confirmed that the police were investigating the reported involvement of Punzalan in the illegal drug trade.

"It all started with the death of a suspected drug pusher in their town. His brother, Boyet Punzalan, was the prime suspect. We're working on it," Alejandrino said.

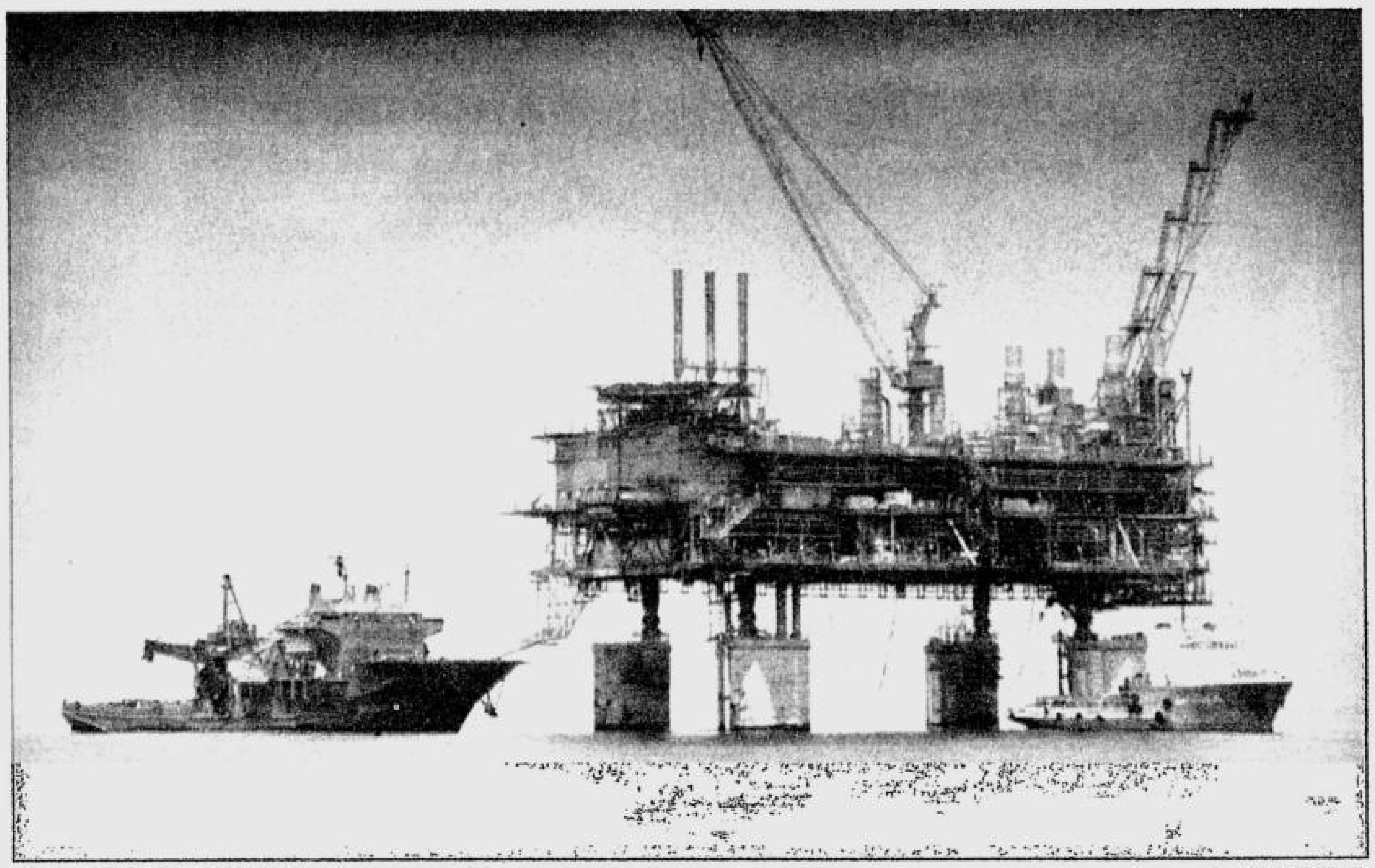
Perpiñan, a resident of Lucena, also disclosed that Quezon policemen had killed those who dared to cross the path of Alcala and that some members of the media and the judiciary in the province were protecting the drug syndicate.

The whistle-blower is now under the custody of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp). He is applying for inclusion in the Witness Protection Program.

With the help of Fr. Raul "Puti" Enriquez and running priest Robert Reyes, Perpiñan is set to file charges today against Alcala and several local officials of Quezon before the Department of Justice.

Perpiñan said it was Alcala's

QUEZON/ A20



EDWIN BACASMAS

HOPE IN WATERWORLD

With the newly installed platform complex of the Malampaya project, 80 km northwest of Palawan, energy officials and project stakeholders expect to draw natural gas from under the sea starting Oct. 1 and deliver it to a processing plant in Batangas through a 504-km pipeline.

Ramos out to 'demonize' me, says Estrada

By Volt Contreras, Martin Marfil and TJ Burgonio

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada yesterday accused Fidel V. Ramos of making up charges to "demonize" him, as he dismissed his predecessor's allegation that the Estrada administration was to blame for the still to be proven kidnapping and killing of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer.

"They can put out all these fabrications against me. I'm expecting that. They want to really demonize me, to discredit me," Estrada said in an interview in Cebu City.

The deposed leader will indeed be asked by authorities to tell exactly what happened during a meeting with Dacer in Malacañang last Nov. 22, a couple of days before the PR man was reportedly kidnapped, Director Reynaldo Wycoco of the National Bureau of Investigation said.

And the Dacer family welcomed the willingness of Ramos and Estrada to submit to questioning by government authorities in order to shed light on the identities of those who might want to have seen the controversial publicist dead.

"Both of them are close to the family and if they'll be invited (for questioning), it will remove all doubts that have been shed upon the characters who have been linked to the case," said Chelen Reyes, one of Dacer's sons-in-law.

"We want to know (from Estrada) what happened during their talk although Mrs. Ampy Dacer-Henson (Dacer's daughter) has already told us what happened. So more or less, we know what really

RAMOS/ A6

Dacers still in limbo over PR man's fate

By Volt Contreras

"YOU may think that they were prepared for this. But, no, nothing really prepares you for this."

The four daughters and in-laws of Salvador "Bubby" Dacer are in limbo, perhaps only days away from confirming that they will never see their father again.

And although hoping against hope for good news, they must prepare for the possibility that forensic experts will confirm that bones and dentures discovered near a creek bed in Cavite belonged to Dacer and his driver, Manuel Corbito.

"We are not holding Mass or a *lamay* (wake). We have not rearranged the furniture. We've not given up. The sisters don't consider it final yet," said Chelen Reyes, husband of Dacer's second daughter, Sabina.

Even so, the family members have made representations through their lawyers to figure out what to do with Dacer's property and unfinished business both here and in the United States.

"Somehow it's beginning to sink in . . . and more or less the sisters had prior knowledge that that's how it happened, through text messages and e-mail that had circulated earlier," Reyes said of the alleged murder of Dacer, who has been missing for more than three months.

But, he added, they were still unbelieving when they learned that two witness-suspects had confessed to aiding the alleged murderers of their father.

The Dacers will accept the findings of National Bureau of Investigation forensic experts who are trying to establish whether the bones were Dacer's and Corbito's.

"We trust the NBI, but we'll patiently wait for the forensic evidence," Reyes said.

Reyes said that long before the arrest of the two suspects on March 28, family members had started making legal representations here and in the United States to "consolidate our father's assets and liabilities."

For the process to be complete, he said, "we are being required by

DACERS/ A6

Cops arrest ex-Yugoslav president

Former Balkans strongman to face corruption charges

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia—Former President Slobodan Milosevic, architect of a decade of Balkan wars, was whisked away to prison Sunday after a 26-hour armed standoff with police who arrested him to face corruption charges stemming from his ruinous rule.

Milosevic surrendered after late-night negotiations between the government and his Socialist Party. Local television showed footage of the car carrying Milosevic entering Belgrade's Central Prison and the iron gates closing behind it.

Most Belgrade newspapers hit the stands Sunday with special morning editions. "It's Finished, Milosevic is Arrested!" read the splash headline in Ekspres Politika.

Milosevic's arrest followed threats by the United States to suspend $50 million in economic aid if President Vojislav Kostunica's government did not show willingness to cooperate with the UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands.

The UN tribunal indicted Milosevic for war crimes and crimes against humanity in connection with atrocities committed during his harsh crackdown on ethnic Albanians.

Kostunica has refused to extradite Milosevic to The Hague, insisting he should be tried at home for corruption and other alleged crimes against the Yugoslav people. However, Yugoslav authorities clearly hope that in arresting Milosevic, regardless of the charges, the Bush administration will certify that the new democratic government has met conditions for

COPS/ A19

MILOSEVIC: Off to prison

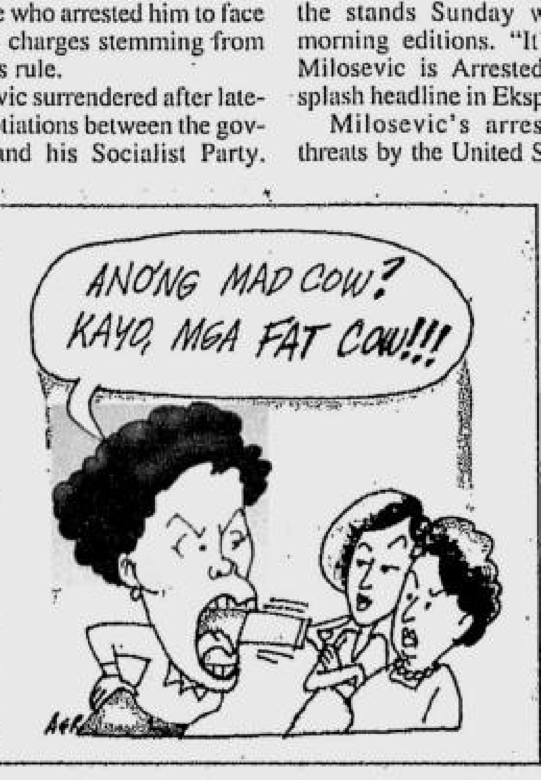
Miriam: 'No. 1 foe' of Makati elite

PUBLIC Enemy No. 1 of the Makati elite and staunch defender of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago took on these roles before some 5,000 townmates of Estrada during a rally of opposition senatorial candidates in San Juan, Metro Manila, on Saturday night.

"I declare myself to be the Public Enemy No. 1 of the Makati rich and I plead guilty to the charges, Your Honor . . .," the feisty senator said.

MIRIAM/ A19


ANO'NG MAD COW? KAYO, MGA FAT COW!!!

High-intensity political action over 'lewd' film

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's administration has run into a tempest that it does not need—the controversy over the withdrawal from public cinema of the film "Live Show."

The controversy erupted in the midst of the effort to stabilize her two-month-old government as it continues to face challenges to its legitimacy from deposed President Joseph Estrada.

It is an unnecessary distraction on the path of political consolidation. It has roused part of the President's constituency in People Power II—the artists' community and defender—to protest against the ban on the film on the grounds of suppression of artistic freedom and of interference of Jaime Cardinal Sin in the affairs of the state.

It is not my purpose to pass judgment on the quality of the film or say whether it should be banned on the grounds of defending public morality, although it might have been better if it had been left to the public to decide whether the film deserves their money's worth. Most likely, they would get tired with it after a single viewing.

The President has defended the ban, saying it was consistent with one of the core values she has set for her administration, i.e., fostering high standards of morality and governance. These are fundamental policy goals; she has a right to decide how these should be implemented.

Rather, this article seeks to raise certain issues that have something to do with the priorities of the national agenda.

The constituency that Ms Macapagal has alienated is largely composed of artists and passionate guardians of the freedom of expression. The controversy has put incompatible bedfellows on the same boat. How this boat, rocked by contentious people, will stay afloat is, therefore, a big problem.

HIGH-INTENSITY/ A20

Second FRONT PAGE

PLEASE NAMAN, PAPASUKIN NYO KAMI!

RP to revive claim over Mischief Reef

Scarborough Shoal issue to be taken up also at meet

By Rocky Nazareno

THE PHILIPPINES will revive its claims over the disputed Mischief Reef when a government panel faces its Chinese counterpart tomorrow at the Department of Foreign Affairs in a meeting designed to be a confidence-building measure.

According to a ranking DFA source, the Philippines will reiterate its request for free access to Mischief Reef, which is located 135 nautical miles west of Palawan.

The Philippine government first made a formal request for access to Mischief Reef last year during another confidence-building meeting in Beijing.

The right time

At that meeting, the Chinese government pledged to grant Philippine vessels access to Mischief Reef "at the right time."

"But when is the right time?" asked the DFA official who requested anonymity.

The dispute over Mischief Reef reached a precarious pass in 1995 when the Philippines discovered that China was constructing what looked like a military fortress on the outcrop of land.

The Philippines was wary that the structures might be used as a staging point for an invasion of the country. The structure had a helipad and barracks.

The Chinese government denied the structures were to be used by its military. It claimed the buildings were shelter for Chinese fishermen who frequent the area.

Scarborough issue

Also expected to be discussed at the meeting is the proposed imposition by the Philippines of a moratorium on fishing around another island being contested by both countries—Scarborough Shoal.

Vice President and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. had earlier suggested a moratorium on fishing around the shoal.

The Chinese government quickly shot down the proposal in a protest lodged by its Manila embassy with the DFA.

The Chinese said Scarborough Shoal, which they call Huangyun Island, is a traditional Chinese fishing ground and historically a part of their territory.

Scarborough Shoal is located 180 nautical miles west of Zambales.

Aside from Mischief Reef and Scarborough Shoal, the Philippines and China are also each claiming sovereignty over the Spratly Islands. They are joined in that dispute by Malaysia, Taiwan, Vietnam and Brunei which all claim ownership of the island chain in the South China Sea which is believed to lie on top of a rich oil deposit.

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Soldier slain, 2 hurt in clash with NPA

DAVAO CITY—An Army sergeant was killed and two soldiers were wounded in an encounter with New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas who were guarding the Southern Mindanao Regional Party Committee assembly of the Communist Party of the Philippines in Cateel, Davao Oriental Saturday.

Reports reaching the Philippine Army's 701st Brigade headquarters in Mawab, Compostela Valley, said three of the rebels were captured while trying to escape.

Col. Felipe Beroya, 701st chief, said two platoons of soldiers from the 30th Special Forces encountered seven NPA sentries in Barangay Aliwagwag in Cateel at around 5:45 a.m. Saturday.

He said three soldiers—Sgt. Gaudencio Añosa, Sgt. Jolito Lugaban and Cpl. Vicente Ramos—were wounded in the encounter.

Añosa later died from loss of blood while the three were being airlifted to the Davao Regional Hospital in Tagum City.

Beroya identified the arrested suspected NPA rebels as Oscar Matumpid and two others who only gave their names as Virgie and Gilbert.

Area of concern

Beroya said the rebels put up a fight. The military called up reinforcements from the 8th Special Forces and the 60th Infantry Battalion.

The firefight continued until late Saturday afternoon.

Assault helicopters and Air Force planes also conducted air strikes in the forested area around Cateel Saturday and yesterday.

Supt. Jorge Aquisap, Davao Oriental police chief, said Barangay Aliwagwag was a "hotbed" of NPA activity.

Police have classified the village as an "area of concern" in the May 14 elections.

Minors captured

In Pagadian City, three NPA rebels were killed while eight others were captured in separate clashes in Western Mindanao.

Two of those captured were minors—a 10-year-old boy and a 16-year-old girl.

Brig. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, chief of the Army's First Infantry Division, said government soldiers belonging to the 5th Infantry Battalion clashed with NPA rebels in the remote village of Bogo Calabat in Josefina town, Zamboanga del Sur last Thursday.

In that clash; two NPA rebels were killed while six others, including two minors, were captured.

Dominguez said the child-rebels would be turned over to the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The military also recovered assorted firearms and ammunition.

On Friday, troops from the 55th Infantry Battalion clashed with NPA rebels in Barangay Midatag, Leon Postigo town in Zamboanga del Norte.

A rebel was killed while two female guerrillas were wounded and captured. The wounded rebels were identified as Marivic Cusi, 22, and Jenelyn Alawi, 20. *Jowel Canuday and Hernan de la Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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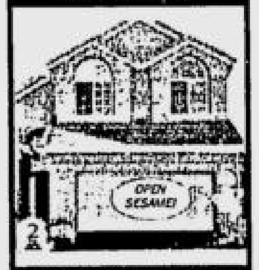

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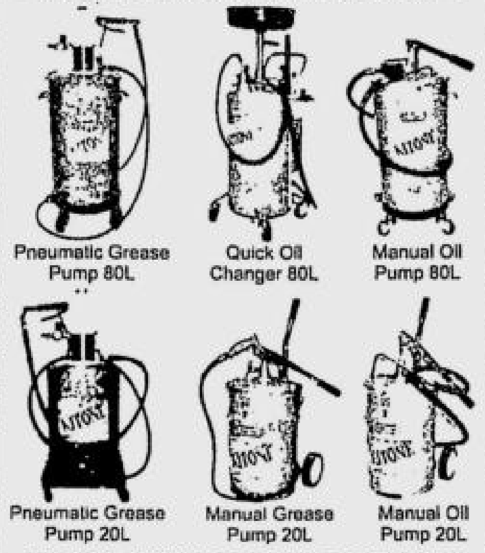

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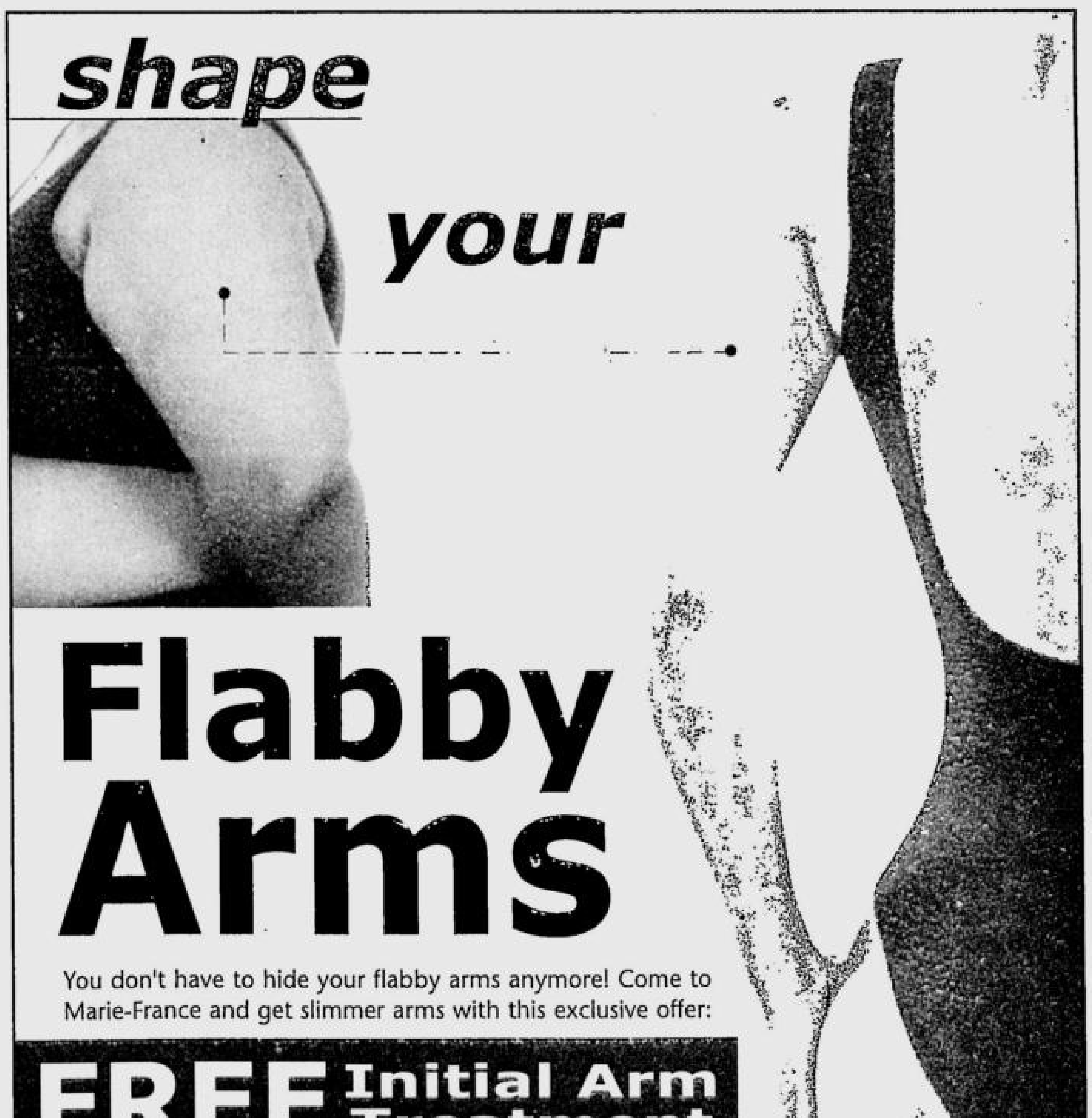

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Major's release in time for birthday in jeopardy

BY CARLITO PABLO

ARMY Maj. Noel Buan may have to spend a second birthday in a row on April 4 with his captors in the Melito Glor Command of the communist New People's Army.

Buan turns 39 on Wednesday with no other wish than for his immediate freedom.

Government and other sources revealed that under a prior agreement, Buan was supposed to be released on the first week of April.

However, alleged violations of the ceasefire separately announced by the government and the National Democratic Front could push this date back further.

A government source said final details of the release had been worked out several days ago although the source declined to provide details.

"Let's just leave it at that because disclosure may jeopardize the safe and orderly release of Buan," said the source who asked not to be named.

Reyes denial

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes denied the military has violated the ceasefire with the NPA, as he expressed the hope that Buan would be released soon.

"The other side is engaging in some kind of propaganda war," Reyes said in a radio program at dzRH hosted by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

Reyes said the police and military have not been engaging in operations in Southern Tagalog where the President earlier declared a suspension of offensive military operations (SOMO) to pave the way for peace negotiations with the NDF.

He admitted there were "continuing efforts by the military and police to protect the communities and facilities; and to ensure that peace and order are safeguarded."

The NDF has complained that government forces continue to harass communities suspected of harboring rebels.

The ceasefire was broken by a recent encounter between government troops and NPA rebels.

No media

A non-government source said that due to security concerns, the Melito Glor Command is considering releasing Buan without the usual extensive media coverage which attended previous releases of prisoners held by communist rebels.

The same source said that Buan will be handed over to the humanitarian mission coordinating the release which will then take him to his family.

The International Committee of the Red Cross will also be involved in the actual release of the Army officer.

Buan, intelligence officer of the armed forces Southern Luzon Command, was captured in July 1999.

The NDF has declared a ceasefire in the Southern Tagalog region from March 17 to April 11.

The ceasefire was in reciprocation of the government's suspension of military and police operations in the region.

NOT A PRETTY SIGHT. Campaign posters and other paraphernalia assault the senses throughout the country, such as this scene in front of the Davao del Sur National High School. The Commission on Elections has said it will meet with the candidates to convince them to remove the eyesores after the elections.

ALLAN NAWAL

One year later, plane crash still a mystery

BY TJ BURGONIO

THE FIRST anniversary of the April 19 crash of Air Philippines Flight 541 is approaching but relatives of the victims have yet to learn the cause of the tragedy, as the special investigation team formed by ousted President Joseph Estrada has failed to produce an official report.

Flight 541 crashed into a coconut grove on Samal Island in Davao Oriental on April 19 last year, killing all of its 138 passengers and crew. It was one of the country's worst air disasters.

The Air Transportation Office has asked the Presidential ad hoc committee headed by retired Air Force Gen. William Hotchkiss to release its findings so the ATO could start its re-investigation.

"So far we have not seen a committee report. I myself am interested in seeing their report and the findings of their investigation," ATO chief Adelberto Yap said in an interview.

Own investigation

He said the ATO has to conduct its own probe as it is the only body recognized by the International Civil Aviation Organization to investigate air accidents in the country.

"The (Hotchkiss) committee's findings would be that of individuals outside of the ATO. Its officials are not connected to the ATO. We're the official, legal investigating arm recognized by other countries," Yap said.

Yap believes that if the ATO had been allowed to continue with its investigation into the crash last year, it would have completed the probe a long time ago.

Two months after the crash, Estrada created the Hotchkiss committee to take over the investigation from the ATO to appease angry relatives of the victims who had accused the agency of a cover-up.

Waiting for report

Yap said the ATO has been waiting for the Hotchkiss committee to release its findings and turn over its materials to the ATO which would re-investigate the accident.

Yap added that the findings of the Hotchkiss committee could not be used by the survivors of the victims as a basis for filing a class suit against Air Philippines until the ATO conducts an official investigation.

"That is not allowed in court. Their investigation won't be conclusive," he said.

Yap said the ATO would not be basing its re-investigation on the results of the Hotchkiss committee report.

He said the length of the re-investigation would depend on the availability of witnesses.

Gloria explains flap over '13-0' skepticism

BY JULIET LABOG-JAVELLANA

HAVING offended her partymates and administration candidates for her seeming skepticism about a 13-0 victory, President Macapagal-Arroyo has been trying to make it up to the candidates, particularly the ones at the bottom of the surveys.

At the People Power Coalition grand proclamation rally in Mandaluyong last Saturday, she stressed to the crowd that her administration cannot succeed if the pro-administration candidates do not win the majority in the Senate.

"That's why I'm asking you, particularly those of you who sweated it out at Edsa, don't let what we worked for go to waste. We will not be able to carry out our programs if the Senate is not ours, if the PPC is not in the Senate," Ms Macapagal said.

The President admitted to being afraid to ask people to vote straight 13-0 for the PPC for one reason.

"Sometimes I'm afraid to say '13-0' because I'm afraid you might write '13-0.' That's not allowed. That's bloc voting. You have to remember the names of the (PPC) candidates," she said.

Ms Macapagal took pains to make the audience know and remember the names of the PPC candidates, as well as the issues they stood for.

Like a cheerleader, she chanted "Vot For D Chammp"—the catchy slogan representing the first letters of the names of the 13 PPC candidates.

The acronym stands for Manuel Villar, Sergio Osmeña III, Wigberto Tañada, Juan Flavier, Obet (Roberto) Pagdanganan, Ralph Recto, Franklin Drilon, Liwayway Vinzons Chato, Ernesto Herrera, Joker Arroyo, Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Solita "Winnie" Monsod and Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan.

For the first time, Recto's movie star wife, Vilma Santos, who is also mayor of Lipa City, appeared at a PPC rally last Saturday.

Sharon Cuneta, the movie star wife of Pangilinan, has appeared in at least three rallies to campaign for her husband.

Santos emphasized the need for all 13 candidates to win, saying she has first-hand experience in realizing the need for teamwork.

Recto said that if the 13 PPC candidates are elected, there would be an administration majority enough to pass the budget and other important measures in the chamber.

Bobby Sanchez, media bureau director of Lakas-NUCD, said the President has made a special effort to campaign hard for Monsod, Chato, Pagdanganan and Tañada.

"That's her way of saying she is pushing for 13-0," Sanchez said.

The four are not in the Magic 13 survey of the Social Weather Stations.

Enrile threatens 'poster war'

CEBU CITY—Opposition senatorial candidate Juan Ponce Enrile is mad.

Yesterday he threatened to have all the administration People Power Coalition's campaign posters torn down nationwide.

The threat was made in an interview where he told reporters that his posters have been destroyed in Antique province.

"I've received reports that some of my posters are being destroyed in some parts of the country. So I've ordered my people to identify those behind the destruction and then to destroy the posters of the other candidates," he said.

Enrile hinted that he knew who the PPC candidate was behind the destruction but he refused to name names.

"I'm not going to tell you. I'm going to talk to him first," Enrile said.

Later, however, in another talk with reporters, Enrile said he suspected that people working for PPC candidate Franklin Drilon were behind the destruction of his posters.

"They better tell their people not to do that because I can have their posters removed all over the country . . . in one night," Enrile said.

"I have the organization to do that. They can sue me, I will face them in court," he added.

In Cebu, Enrile's posters were reportedly being marked with "anti-trapo" slogans.

While Enrile threatened to tear down opponents' posters, environment officials have asked the Comelec to prohibit the use of nails and staple wire in posting campaign materials on trees.

Environment Undersecretary Joemari Gerochi, in a letter to Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo, said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources needed the help of the poll body in "protecting urban trees against political campaigners."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, April 2, 2001
5th Week of Lent

1st Reading: Dn 13:41-62
Gospel: Jn 8:12-20

Jesus said to the Jews, "*I am* the Light of the world; the one who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have light and life." The Pharisees replied, "Now you are speaking on your own behalf, your testimony is worthless."

Then Jesus said, "Even though I bear witness to myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I have come from and where I am going. But you do not know where I came from or where I am going.

You judge by human standards; as for me, I don't judge anyone. But if I had to judge, my judgment would be valid for *I am* not alone: the Father who sent me is with me. In your Law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is valid; so I am bearing witness to myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness to me."

They asked him, "Where is your Father?" Jesus answered, "You don't know me or my Father; if you knew me, you would know my Father as well."

Jesus said these things when he was teaching in the Temple area, in the place where they received the offerings. No one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

April 2 Monday – commentary

Jesus speaks plainly and publicly in the hearing of everyone; namely, in the Temple area where offerings are given. He is the light from light. Knowing well who he is and from whom he came, unflinchingly he stands to the truth of his utterances. Nobody can ever budge him from this, not even threats of death. If we have ever compromised the veracity of our statements, it is when our awareness grows dim of who we are and from whom we came, to whom we entrust and commit ourselves.

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CRIMINAL LAW (AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Conspiracy—The actions of appellants show that they conspired to rob and kill the victims. There can be no other conclusion that can be deduced from the foregoing circumstances. Conspiracy need not be proved by direct evidence, and proof of previous agreement to commit the crime is not essential to establish conspiracy. It may be inferred from the acts of the perpetrators, whose conduct before, during and after the commission of the crime, can show its existence. For conspiracy to exist, it is not required that there be an agreement for an appreciable period prior to the occurrence, it is sufficient that at the time of the commission of the offense, the malefactors had the same purpose and were united in its execution. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Purisima, Third Division, People v. Carrozo, G.R. No 97913, October 12, 2000]

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ONLY ON SUNDAYS

Gloria bares secret of happy marriage

By Armand Nocum

LAST week it was the secret of her youthful good looks and vitality. Yesterday, President Macapagal-Arroyo revealed the key to sustaining a happy marriage—keeping an eye on your man.

This is especially true on Sundays, which is just about the only time the First Couple have for each other, she said.

"You know it is on Sundays that I get to watch my husband, man-to-man," she said over radio dzRH where she had dropped in on First Gentleman Mike Arroyo who hosts an hour-long show there.

The President showed up unexpectedly at Arroyo's public service program, "Kakampi."

"I am happy to be here. I'm not scheduled to be here, but I'm taking the chance to be with attorney Mike," she said after co-host Andy Vital asked her to address radio listeners.

Asked what kept their marriage strong, she said they make an effort to find time for each other, even if only on Sundays.

"(Couples) should always be together. They should love each other, be loyal to each other, and be God-centered," she said. "They should find time to be with each other."

Arroyo introduced his wife thus: "This is my very beautiful wife, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo."

He confirmed that the Arroyos try hard to spend Sundays together.

"We are together the whole day of Sunday. She is busy on weekdays running the government," he said.

He himself stays out of government during the work week, Arroyo said.

"I am prohibited from meddling in the affairs of government," he said.

The President said one of the reasons she showed up at her husband's radio program yesterday was to listen to featured guest Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes reveal his plans.

"I would like to listen to the plans of Angelo Reyes. They (the Armed Forces) have won in Mindanao and I expect them not to throw away our gains," she said, referring to the resumption of peace talks with the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Before dropping in on her husband's radio show, Ms Macapagal officially opened the Malacañang Palace grounds to the public for free weekly cultural activities.

The "Sundays in Malacañang Gardens" project is aimed at bringing more families to visit the historic site and "be treated to a whole day of entertainment by renowned artists."

The President made two appearances at yesterday's program. She attended a Mass in the morning and she watched the cultural shows in the afternoon.

On both occasions, she mingled with the public, stopping to sign autographs and to pose for photographs with children.

People could be seen laying out the food that they had brought as they settled down to hold a picnic in the Palace grounds. Having photographs taken with the historic buildings and the Presidential Security Group guards in the background appeared to be very popular.

Bands from the PSG and cultural groups entertained the picnickers and booths offering free medical and dental services were also open.

Comelec to trim losers from party-list race

CANDIDATES in the May 14 elections and those who lost in the 1998 elections should keep off the party-list elections, the Commission on Elections said over the weekend as it began reviewing the list of 810 names submitted as nominees by 162 party-list groups.

The party-list groups were given until last Saturday to submit the names of their five nominees each, but the Comelec reminded them the list should not include any persons running for elective office in the May elections or those who ran and lost in the 1998 elections.

The reminder was issued by the Comelec's education and information department amid concerns raised by some sectoral groups that traditional politicians were using the party-list system as a vehicle to win seats in Congress.

The Comelec will specifically look into the list of nominees submitted by 11 big political parties participating in the party-list polls such as the Lakas-NUCD-UMDP, Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, Nacionalista Party, Liberal Party, PDP-Laban, Nationalist People's Coalition, Partido ng Masang Pilipino, People's Reform Party, Aksyon Demo-kratiko, Abag Promdi, and the Organized Support for the Movement to Enhance the National Agenda (Osmena).

The poll body will also review the list to weed out persons who were nominated by more than one party-list group, which is not allowed under the system.

Apart from these prohibitions, the Comelec will allow any natural-born Filipino at least 35 years of age and a resident of the Philippines for not less than one year to be a nominee in the party-list elections.

Youth sector nominees, however, should not be more than 30 years old. Appointed employees in government-owned and controlled corporations who were nominated by party-list groups shall also be deemed resigned from their positions.

For the party-list elections this year, the Comelec has set the number of party-list seats in the House of Representatives at 53 representing 20 percent of the total membership of the House of not more than 250.

A total of 162 political parties, sectoral parties, organizations and coalitions have been accredited to participate in the party-list system in the May 14 elections by the Comelec.

Under the party-list system, a sectoral group, organization or political party may win up to three seats in the House.

If a party wins two percent of the total number of votes cast for the party-list, it is entitled to one seat, with the first nominee representing the party. If it wins four percent, it is entitled to two seats. If it gets six percent, it is entitled to three seats.

The fourth and fifth nominees shall serve as "spares" in case any of the party-list groups' three sitting nominees could no longer represent the group due to resignation, expulsion from the group, death or disability.

Records of the Comelec show that there are six groups representing labor.

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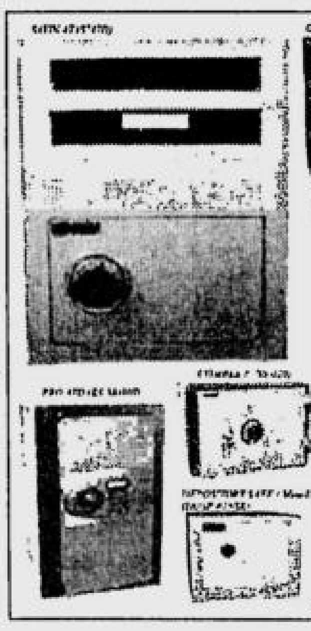

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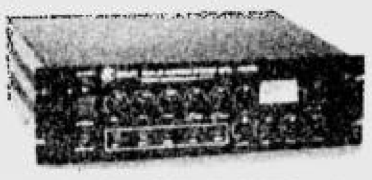

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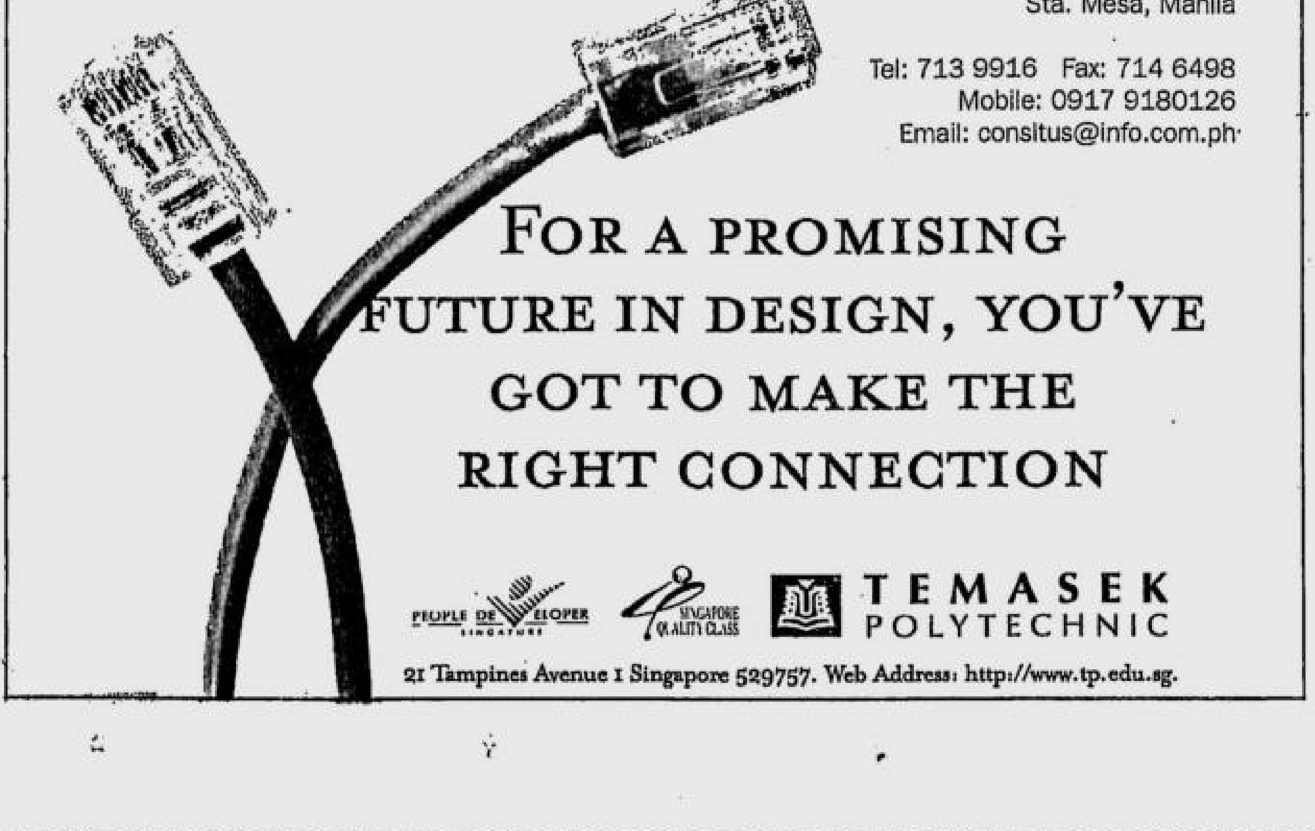

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Ramos out to 'demonize' me, says Estrada

(From page A1)

happened that night," Wycoco said in a radio show on dzBB.

"Whatever he will say will shed more light on the incident," he told Vice President Teofisto Guingona, a co-host of the show.

Ampy had said that an angry Estrada berated Dacer that evening for spearheading an alleged anti-government smear campaign. On the other hand, Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio, who had arranged the meeting, described it as friendly.

Asked by the INQUIRER what the family specifically wanted to learn from the two former presidents, Reyes said Estrada should be asked "what really transpired at that meeting."

Ramos, on the other hand, should fully explain "what their conversation was all about" when Ramos and Dacer talked on the phone regarding an appointment in Manila Hotel on the day of the abduction.

'Psy-war experts'

Ramos, in a People Power Coalition rally on Saturday, said that apart from the 12 plunder cases against Estrada, there was a 13th case: the alleged kidnapping and killing of Dacer and his driver, Manuel Corbito.

Ramos treated the alleged crimes as fact.

He has volunteered to submit himself for questioning to the NBI this afternoon to reveal everything he knows about Dacer's disappearance.

But for Estrada, the accusation is merely an irritant cooked up by Ramos and former National Security Adviser Jose Almonte, whom he described as "psy-war" experts.

Asked to comment on Ramos' charges, Estrada said: "(Let him) go ahead. Nobody can stop him. I'm ready to face anyone."

He brought up Ramos' order to release Lt. Col. Reynaldo Berroya at the start of the 1998 presidential campaign, as part of what Estrada has since claimed was a demolition job against him.

"He even implicated me by releasing Reynaldo Berroya, who went TV (station)-hopping to say I was (involved in a plot to) assassinate Mr. Ramos," Estrada said.

"So, again, the same tactics" are being applied, he added.

Consult lawyers

Estrada claimed that the Ramos-Almonte tandem had been after him for several years, raising a taped conversation—released by his own administration—between Ramos and socialite Rosemarie "Baby" Arenas where the two discussed the ouster of Estrada.

"This duo (Ramos and Almonte) is perfect in psy-war. You've heard the conversation between Ramos and Arenas. They were already plotting at that time," Estrada said.

Asked if he would take Ramos to court, Estrada said that he would instruct his lawyers to study the possibility.

"We'll see . . . I'll consult my legal staff and we'll see how successful they will be in another of their gimmicks, (in this) black propaganda campaign," he said.

"They've fooled the people once, twice, but they won't fool the people all the time," he said.

Dacer, before he disappeared, purportedly sent a letter to Almonte saying he feared that then President Estrada and Lacson were monitoring him and had tagged him as a point man in a plot to destabilize the government.

Who had motive, power?

Two suspects have admitted that they played a part in the kidnapping and disposal of the bodies, and have identified members of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force as the murderers.

The two, Jimmy Lopez and Alex Diloy, have been turned over by the NBI to the Department of Justice prosecutor's office for the filing of charges, Wycoco said.

The pair, who were arrested in Cavite last week, could be charged with kidnapping with double murder within a couple of days, he said.

But Guingona urged investigators to pin down the mastermind.

"We should really get to the bottom of this. The people want to know who gave the orders and who is the principal," he said.

"Let us go to the truth . . . These SPO2s, SPO4s, they're only the executioners," he said of policemen who were identified by Lopez and Diloy.

Guingona said the investigators should ask: "Who has the motive? Who has the opportunity to do this? And who has the power; the means or weapons to do what was done?"

To Erap's doorstep

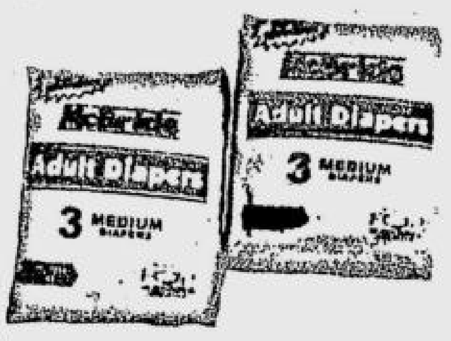
He said the NBI should summon Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña, former chief of the PAOCTF unit in the Visayas, for questioning. The suspects claimed Viña gave the final order to kill Dacer and Corbito.

PPC senatorial candidate Joker Arroyo said the evidence was "leading to (Estrada's) doorstep."

Estrada could not escape blame in the Dacer case, if only because Dacer and Corbito disappeared while he was president, Arroyo said.

The former President, he stressed, was "duty-bound" while in office to investigate the disappearance of the two, but "it took the present administration to uncover what happened to Dacer and Corbito."

"Erap has a lot of explaining to do," Arroyo said in a phone interview. *With a report from Christine Avendaño*



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Dacers still in limbo over PR man's fate

(From page A1)

our lawyers both in the Philippines and the US to present an official report of what happened to him. If he's dead, they want a certified copy of a death certificate from the appropriate Philippine government authority."

He sought to clarify once and for all that the Dacer sisters were not going to collect insurance, saying they were hurt by earlier "insinuations" in the media that they wanted the NBI to issue their father's death certificate so that they could speed up the collection process.

He said that the insinuation that "we want him dead for material gain" was "rubbing salt on our wounds."

No insurance

Bubby Dacer "had no insurance (policy) whatsoever in any part of the world, including the Philippines. Fortunately or unfortunately, he did not believe and never believed in the value of any insurance of any kind," Reyes said.

"And if there's anything we may end up sharing as inheritance, it will be our father's standing liabilities," he said.

The Dacers now feel obliged to look after the family of Corbito, Bubby's driver for several years, he said.

"We are also considering selling his golf shares to raise money so that we can all contribute in paying for a house he bought on a loan in Los Angeles," Reyes said, adding that Dacer's three other daughters—Karina, Ampy and Emily—are now staying in that house.

Dacer's small PR company, which used to occupy two rooms at The Manila Hotel, was dissolved as early as last December.

AMPY and Emily Dacer: Hoping against hope.

"That office was really him, and nobody in the family can take over. And as we said among ourselves, that line of work brought this (tragedy) upon us. Do we really have to pursue it still?" Reyes said.

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KAREN Lapaz and her captor's cat "Ming" in Davao City. GENE BOYD LUMAWAG

Kitten sees kidnap victim through

BY JOWEL CANUDAY
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Freed kidnap victim Karen Lapaz found comfort and the strength to survive her seven-month ordeal—from her kidnappers' cat.

Lapaz became so attached to her abductors' cat that she took it with her when she was freed.

"Ming (the cat's name) gave me solace and the comfort in those trying times," recounted 19-year-old Lapaz as she kissed the cat she was embracing while talking to reporters yesterday.

Lapaz, a sophomore student of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Southeastern Mindanao, was kidnapped while visiting a farm in Kabacan, North Cotabato on Sept. 14 last year.

Her abductors demanded a P1.5-million ransom but her family, which is engaged in a small-scale money lending business in Sarangani province, told the kidnappers they could not afford it.

Lapaz, however, was released to her mother Annie on March 31 after payment of an undetermined "board and lodging" fee.

Lapaz said her abductors did not harm her. But she said it would have been doubly difficult for her to survive had it not for the cat that she befriended during her abduction.

Lapaz said she found the cat when it was just a frail kitten in one of the houses in Liguasan Marsh where she was held a few days after her abduction.

She said she immediately became attached to the kitten and even pleaded with her captors to leave it with her. Her abductors agreed and showed no resistance when she brought it with her when she was finally released to a team of negotiators in Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat on Saturday.

Lapaz said she had been set up for abduction by an ex-boyfriend whose relatives were her kidnappers.

She, however, refused to name her ex-boyfriend so as not to jeopardize ongoing operations by government agents against the kidnappers.

Lapaz said she was kidnapped after she agreed to visit her ex-boyfriend's relatives at their farm in a village called Bulit in Kabacan on Sept. 14.

She said she was surprised when her ex-boyfriend suddenly disappeared from the village and left her alone with his cousin.

Estrada says standing up to Church caused ouster

BY AGNES DONATO

WHILE President Macapagal-Arroyo has been accused of pandering to the religious moralists in the "Live Show" controversy, her deposed predecessor claims to have refused to give in to the Church and was deposed as a result.

On Saturday, deposed President Joseph Estrada offered his version of his ouster in the people power uprising last January to a crowd of about 5,000 San Juan residents gathered for the proclamation of his son, JV Ejercito, as candidate for town mayor.

Estrada accused the Church of having led the ouster plot against him because they did not see eye to eye on such issues as the Visiting Forces Agreement, population control and the war in Mindanao.

He said Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin had repeatedly sent his emissaries to convince him to change his point of view on these issues.

But he said he had to turn the Church down because its position did not jibe with what he believed was good for the country.

On the VFA issue, Estrada claimed that the Church had no reason to worry about the possible spread of prostitution as the US forces would not be based here permanently.

"If the US military would be going to Mindanao, do you think prostitutes would go all the way there just to service the men? They won't be able to make any money from the expense of transportation alone," Estrada said.

He also said his only consideration was national security when he pushed for the VFA and when he declared an all-out war against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

He said he called a stop to the 40-day ceasefire with the MILF because the rebels were only using it to re-group and continue with their mass recruitment.

"The Church was only after 40 days of tranquility, but what I wanted was lasting peace," Estrada said.

Estrada said he also disagreed with the Church on population control. While the Church championed the natural method of birth control, he claimed to have encouraged couples to choose their own approach.

Five months after the "juetengate" scandal broke that led to his ouster, Estrada still insists that he did not receive a single centavo from the illegal gambling pay-offs.

PPC candidates ink 'pact with people'

BY JULIET LABOG-JAVELLANA

CANDIDATES of the pro-administration People Power Coalition signed on Saturday a covenant subscribing to one fundamental tenet—that power belongs to the people.

The candidates pledged to live by their "Covenant with the People" during the grand proclamation of the PPC-Lakas candidates for 17 mayoral and 26 congressional seats in Metro Manila, and for the 13 senatorial candidates.

An estimated 20,000 people attended the proclamation rally held last Saturday in Mandaluyong bailiwick of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

President Macapagal-Arroyo and former President Fidel Ramos took turns in criticizing and making fun of Estrada but no untoward reaction was drawn from those who crowded the huge stage that had been set up at the intersection of Acacia Lane and Shaw Blvd.

Ms Macapagal accused the Estrada administration of only pretending to be pro-poor.

Unlucky number

Ramos called on the people to vote for all 13 PPC senatorial candidates, noting that Estrada's unlucky number 13 would prove to be the administration's lucky number.

Aside from the President and Ramos, Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., PPC deputy campaign manager for Metro Manila Sen. Rene Cayetano, presidential political adviser Joey Rufino, PPC spokesperson Conrado "Dodi" Limcaoco and local Metro Manila officials attended the four-hour rally.

According to the covenant, the PPC candidates would promote housing, education, health and employment opportunities. They vowed to combat "all forms of corruption" in government, illegal drugs and gambling.

New politics

It said the candidates, particularly in Metro Manila, have programs to solve the perennial problems of floods, garbage and traffic, and to protect the environment.

"We will deliver the cities and the nation from hopelessness, neglect and lack of unity," the covenant, written in Filipino, said.

Senatorial candidate Francis Pangilinan said the covenant was the starting point of the new administration's program to instill new politics.

The President said in her speech that the people yearned for good government when they overthrew Estrada in a second peaceful people power revolt.

"Good governance is the banner of People Power II, and it is what the leadership and candidates of the PPC represent," Ms Macapagal said.

Ramos focused on the theme of Estrada's unlucky number 13.

He said that had Estrada used his real name Joseph Ejercito, he would have ended up with 14 letters. He chose his screen name Joseph Estrada instead.

But it proved to be unlucky, Ramos said.

Ramos recounted how when he paid a courtesy call on Estrada in October 1998, the then president coaxed his executive secretary, Ronaldo Zamora, to explain to him why he (Estrada) was the ninth and not the 13th president.

Ramos said Zamora came up with the explanation that Estrada was the ninth president of the fourth Philippine Republic, counting the four periods when the country was under three different foreign rulers and one commonwealth.

"But he realized that 9 plus 4 is still 13," Ramos said.

Now comes the 13th case against Estrada after the 12 plunder cases being readied against him, said Ramos. The 13th case is the kidnap-slaying of public relations man, Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Manuel Corbito, Ramos said.

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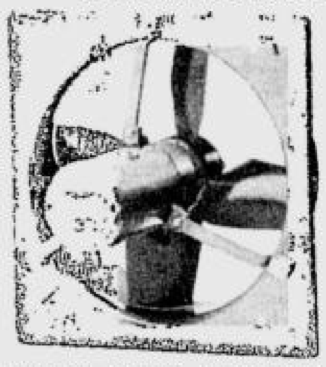

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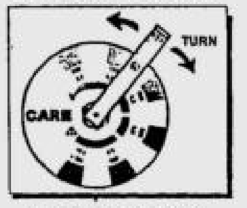

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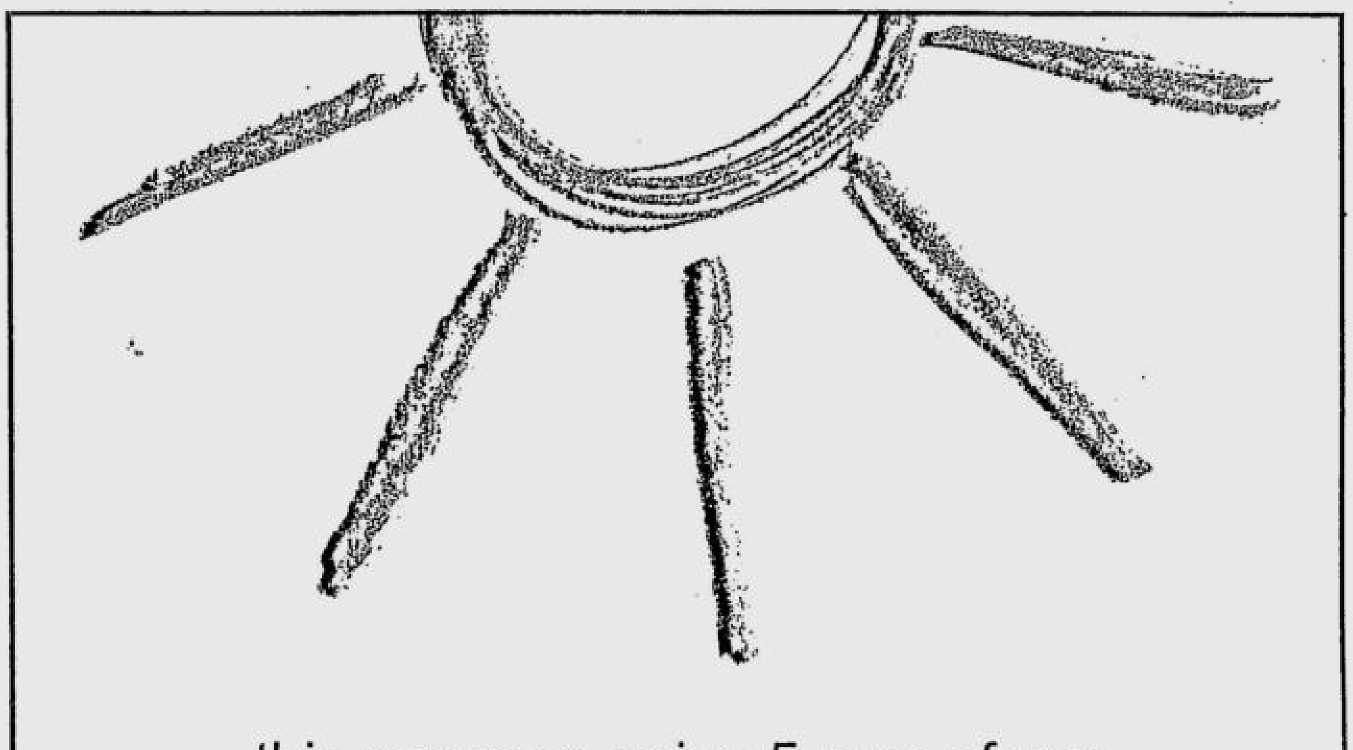

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OPINION

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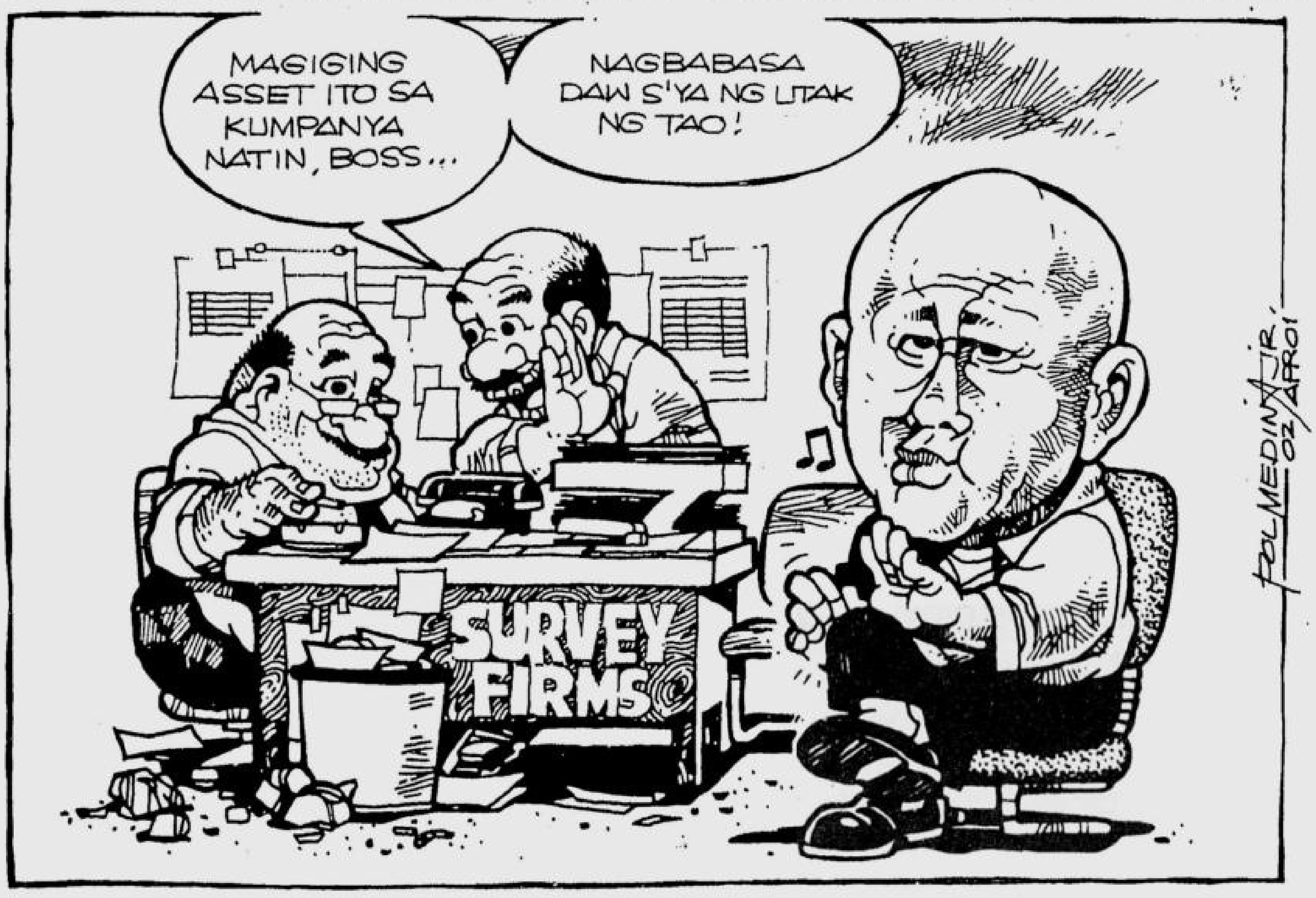
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An information campaign

EDITORIAL

ALL is not lost for the four million or so youths who failed to register for the elections in May. They said they want to perform their civic duty by voting in the coming polls but circumstances are preventing them from doing so. They can still do their duty as citizens by helping in a large-scale, nationwide voters' education and information campaign.

But it is said that not all of the four million youths are themselves well-informed about the issues. A big number of them are out-of-school youths or young people who live in the hinterlands and who do not have sufficient information about the candidates and the issues because they have to work in the farms and on the mountains. Well, the educated, informed youths can probably adopt the "each one, teach one" approach to help their less-informed countrymen.

The youths living in the urban areas, who are presumably better informed than those in the hinterlands, can educate and inform the latter. And the youths in the hinterlands can then educate and inform their families, neighbors and other members of their communities.

What should be the focus of the educational and informational campaign? For starters, the campaign can discuss the qualifications of the candidates for national and local offices. Are they academically and intellectually prepared for the work they will perform as public servants? What are their core values? Do they have ethical and moral standards? What are their motives for seeking public office? What qualities or skills make a candidate the best person for the job?

The young information campaigners can also look into the source of campaign funds of the candidates. Are big contributions coming from *jueteng* or drug lords or big businessmen who could become the candidates' cronies in the future? The voters have to be informed about this so that they will know to which interests a candidate will be beholden. Experience has shown that public service suffers when certain candidates, after their election, have to pay off large political and financial debts. We've seen what deposed President Joseph Estrada did after his election.

The young information campaigners will also have to discuss the stand of the candidates on the issues. Perhaps in instances where certain candidates take the easy way out by not making any statement, they should force these candidates to state their stand. The young campaigners can perform a distinct public service by pinning the candidates down on the major issues so that after their election they can be held to their promises.

For candidates who have previously held other public offices, if they are legislators, the youths can do research on their legislative output and on the way they voted on major issues. As for the candidates who are running for executive posts, the voters will have to know something about their governing or management style. This way the voters will know what to expect of their candidates in case they are reelected or elected to new positions. A report on the track record of candidates will certainly help voters make intelligent, informed choices in the coming elections.

Four million youths—think of the great service they can render to the nation in the coming elections. If only each one of them can talk to one voter, that could mean four million better informed electors. If each one of them can talk to two, that would mean eight million (out of the 34 million registered voters) who would be better informed about the qualifications of candidates and their stand on the issues.

The four million or so youths said they failed to register because they were participating in rallies or demonstrations at the height of the juetengate hearings and the Senate impeachment trial. They can still make up for their failure to register—and thus their inability to vote in the coming elections—by conducting a massive educational and information campaign. That would give substance to their call for new politics.

GMA has a kind heart, but not her subordinate officials

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

HERE'S good news and bad news:

First, the good news. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo—bless her kind heart—has saved a widow from being thrown out of her home by a heartless bureaucrat.

The widow, Ms Andree K. Lagdameo of San Juan, had borrowed P700,000 for a beauty parlor from the Livelihood Corp. (Livecor),a government financial institution set up to give loans and assistance for livelihood projects. She mortgaged her house and lot as collateral. When she had paid P200,000 of the loan back, tragedy struck, tragedy caused by the incompetence of the government. That was the power crisis that plunged the whole country in daily eight-hour brownouts which paralyzed the beauty salon that needed electricity to operate its equipment.

Then, Ms Lagdameo's mother, husband and daughter died one after another, a shock that threw her off balance. When she recovered, the loan balance of less than P600,000 had ballooned to P7 million because of the usurious 24-percent annual interest and the 3-percent monthly penalty, plus another 3 percent penalty on the penalty. Ms Lagdameo was willing to pay the principal and the interest but not the penalties and asked Livecor for mercy. Agriculture Secretary Edgardo Angara and Undersecretary Demaree J.B. Raval approved a condonation of 97 percent of the penalties but when the new administration took over after People Power II, the officer in charge, Gerardo G. Gatus, overturned the decision and ordered foreclosure proceedings on Ms Lagdameo's home this April 24.

I wrote about this case in my March 19 column. President Macapagal read it and, in a press conference the very next day, without anybody asking her, ordered Livecor, "as an example, to restudy the case of Andree K. Lagdameo, and all those similarly situated, to free them from penalties and give them a chance to start anew and give them all the breaks they need." God bless you, Ms President.

Ms Lagdameo is overjoyed and very grateful to the President. "It was as if a heavy cross was lifted from my shoulders," she said. "The people who were deaf to my pleas before are suddenly very kind, including Mr. Gatus himself," she added. "But there are many other poor souls who are similarly situated as me."

So, all you out there, the President's order is not only for Ms Lagdameo but to all others "similarly situated." So take advantage of the President's kindness and have Livecor restudy your cases to condone the penalties.

And don't forget to send letters of thanks to the President.

* * *

Now for the bad news:

Other bureaucrats, drunk with power, are still committing injustices to civil service eligibles by illegally terminating them to create vacancies for their protégés. I mentioned the case of Director Ike Señeres of the National Computer Center, in my March 16 column, whose replacement was appointed although Señeres, being a civil service eligible, has security of tenure. Neither has he resigned nor been terminated and there is no case against him.

Now comes the case of Elmer Garcia Mendoza, president and chief executive officer of Quedancor, whose replacement was appointed by Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor although he has no authority to do that. The president of Quedancor is appointed by its governing board. Furthermore, there is no vacancy. Mercado, being a civil service eligible (he topped the CSC examinations given by the Career Executive Service Board on Feb. 9, 2001) has security of tenure. Like Señeres, there is no case against him and he has not resigned—although Montemayor kept asking for his courtesy resignation. Montemayor admitted that he is removing Mendoza not because of any wrongdoing but because "it is his privilege to do so." Not being a lawyer, Montemayor does not realize that a forced resignation amounts to "constructive dismissal" which is illegal and opens him to a suit for damage.

Informed that the governing board of Quedancor, and not him, has the authority to appoint the president, Montemayor called the board to a meeting on March 22, without due notice, to elect a new president. The alternate members, not the regular members, attended and, so that the board secretary cannot question their credentials and authority, Montemayor replaced him. Nelson C. Buenaflor, the executive vice president, was appointed president.

This is still irregular and illegal. While the governing board has the power to appoint, it has no residual power to remove the president without just and lawful cause as provided for under the Civil Service Law and the Revised Administrative Code. Therefore, there is no vacancy, and the appointment of Buenaflor is irregular and illegal. Moreover, that board meeting of March 22 was also irregular as there was no due notice and the alternate members who attended were either not duly authorized by law to participate nor vote or elect a new president and chief executive officer.

Because of all these illegalities, Mercado has filed a petition for restraining order which the court granted.

President Macapagal has repeatedly vowed to respect and protect the security of tenure of government career service officers, but her subordinate officials, like Montemayor, are trying very hard to make a liar out of her. There are too many protégés looking for jobs.

The irony is that Mendoza, the man Montemayor wants to kick out of Quedancor, is supported by his father, Jeremias Montemayor and the Federation of Free Farmers which he represented in the House of Representatives. On the other hand, Buenaflor, the man he wants so much to head Quedancor, is recommended by Erap relatives and cronies. He was recommended by Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, Erap brother-in-law Raul P. de Guzman, Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora, Environment Secretary Antonio Cerilles, presidential consultant on Mindanao economic affairs Wee Dee Ping, and Zamboanga City Mayor Ma. Clara Lobregat, among others.

Maybe the reason is that Buenaflor, as head of the Credit Review Committee and executive vice president of Quedancor, approved a P5-million agricultural loan to Dr. Lucina Ferriols Ejercito of San Juan, Metro Manila

Red is the color of music

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I WAS at the Meralco Theater last Tuesday night to watch a concert by Alexander Tomescu. I had several compelling reasons to do so. One was Tomescu himself. Barely past his youth, he already carried with him some of the most formidable credentials as a violinist, including the plum at the 1996 Jeunesses Musicales International Competition. He would show why at the Meralco that night.

The second reason was that his second piece was Tchaikovsky's Concerto in D, which is just about everyone's favorite violin concerto. I have two versions of it, one featuring Itzhak Perlman (the fellow who played violin in the recent Oscar Awards, Yo-Yo Ma played the cello) and the other featuring Midori. But nothing, I thought, like hearing a live version, especially as performed by a wunderkind.

The third was that Redentor Romero was conducting. I hadn't seen Romero conduct an orchestra since the other year when Anastasia Chebotareva, another violin prodigy and a breathtakingly lovely one ("kissed by God," I said of her in a column), first performed at the Insular Life Theater. I saw Romero a couple of times last year, when Erap lay at death's door, politically, but he wasn't part of the stage, he was part of the audience.

The first was at "Giselle," and we spoke briefly about the interesting times that had befallen the country. I complimented him on the Moscow Ballet. I didn't say there was something a little forlorn about a ballet performed to canned music. The second, and last time, was at Chebotareva's second violin concert at the Insular Life late last year. It was a recital essentially—she played solo. I saw Romero on my way out, and I just took time to offer my congratulations. He beamed. He was proud of his wards.

I had heard he was ailing, but I did not know how seriously. I went to the Meralco last Tuesday fully expecting to see him on the stage brandishing his baton with the controlled fury of one possessed, which is what you need for the Tchaikovsky concerto, and which I had seen Romero do in other concerts. It would not be so. Romero's daughter, Sofia, who came out to introduce the concert, introduced instead a disturbing piece of news. His father was laid low by disease, she said, and so could not join us that night. But never one to take his duties lightly, even as he lay in bed he had given instructions for what they ought to do. He had exerted himself to make sure that the audience would not leave the concert hall raw or dissatisfied.

That was how Romero himself left this world. As it turned out, even as his daughter spoke, he already lay at death's door.

Next day, he breathed his last. I learned about it in Cebu, where I flew to last Wednesday. When I opened the newspapers last Thursday, I was shocked to find he was dead. The terse headline at the ear of the INQUIRER front-page proclaimed so.

Romero's life and accomplishments have been written about, not least by the indefatigable reviewer, promoter and impresario of classical music in this country, Pablo Tariman (government really ought to pin a medal on him or at least release his activist daughter, Kerima, from prison out of sheer gratitude). I myself will remember Romero as a musician who passionately loved classical music and longed to bring it to the ear of the common folk. I don't know, but I keep thinking about him in the same terms as Rolando Tinio, the poet and stage director who passionately loved classical theater and literature and longed to bring them to the eye of the common folk. How successfully they did so is up to future generations to judge.

That was what brought Romero to cross paths, and swords, with the OPM people last year. He objected violently to seeking their permission to bring foreign classical artists to the country. Mitch Valdez and John Lesaca would protest later that they never required classical artists to pay dues for performing in this country or to ask their permission to do so. They merely asked their sponsors to notify them of their presence. Romero replied tartly that Zubin Mehta does not report to Bon Jovi when he brings Japanese *koto* players to perform in the United States.

I never thought it was mere snobbery that made Romero say this—though he did not mince his words in expressing his opinion of Lesaca's musical abilities. It was a burning desire to see that the best the world could offer was made available to the Filipino public, at best with help from government, at least without impediment from any source. Indeed, it was a burning desire to see that the best Filipinos themselves could offer was made available to the Filipino public, at best with the appreciation of fellow musicians, at least without rancor from the least gifted among them.

Quite simply, Romero did not believe classical music was a foreign product, or a sound that was alien to the Filipino ear. He believed it was part of the Filipino experience, or ought to be. Like other Filipino classical musicians, he burnished Filipino compositions into dazzling gems, arranging songs like "Matud Nila" and "Bayan Ko" till they sounded like heaven itself. His arrangements of traditional Filipino Christmas songs (the album is "Philippine Christmas Festival"), played by the Warsaw Philharmonic, is simply magnificent, catching as it does all the hue and color, the blare and caress, of the Filipino Christmas. Nor did he eschew popular music, the turf of OPM, whether it was local or foreign. He has another collection ("Damdaming Pinoy") of Filipino pop songs, from "Anak" to "Kapantay ay Langit," which he performs with the Moscow Philharmonic.

Like other Filipino classical musicians, he made Filipino compositions sound like Mozart and Beethoven. Unlike most other Filipino classical musicians, he tried to bring them to the *accessorias* of Sampaloc as much as to the mansions of Makati, knocking loudly on their doors.

I never got to his wake. But I was there last Tuesday night at the Meralco. I was there when Tomescu cut loose with the strains of Tchaikovsky. His violin didn't sob, like Perlman's, it caressed. And music, being the mysterious, miraculous, inexplicable thing that it is, Romero was there that night at life's stage rather than at deathbed, beaming with approval at someone who, like himself, yearned for his own interpretation, his own stamp on things, his own voice. We rose to applaud thunderously at the end of the concert. I do not think it was just Tomescu we did it for.

Redentor Romero has gone to conduct the Great Concert in the Sky. But for a while there, he put a little laughter in this valley of tears. For a while there, he made sweet music.

Chato to push legislation to improve tax collection

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

AS FORMER President Ramos pointed out, the justice department has to call deposed President Estrada to testify on the Buddy Dacer case, for it is common knowledge that he met with Dacer in Malacañang on the evening of Wednesday, Nov. 22, less than 48 hours before the publicist disappeared with his driver. That Palace meeting was far from cordial. Dacer's daughter, Ampy, who accompanied her father to the Palace, has been quoted as saying that Estrada was very angry with Dacer; a couple of people with whom Dacer had lunch in his office the following noon heard from his own lips how the former President had berated him. "*Minura-mura ako,*" was how he put it. Why was Estrada very angry with Dacer? Caloocan Rep. Luis Asistio, father-in-law of Ampy, could also shed light on the episode as he was present then.

* * *

Former Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, who's seeking his old post versus Lakas Vice Mayor Edu Manzano, sent in a sarcastic reaction to the crusade for good governance launched by Makati's "perfumed crowd," as recounted in this column. I had cited that Makati's well-heeled crusaders are backing up civic leader Melon Recto-Silverio against publisher Teddy Boy Locsin for the second district congressional seat being vacated by Joker Arroyo, in protest against allegations of corruption in the 15-year reign of Binay and his wife, current Mayor Elenita Binay.

In a letter bearing the letterhead of the Balane Tamase Alampay Law Office where he is on leave, former Mayor Binay pointed out that while "historically" the residents of "our gated villages" could be the most vociferous critics of City Hall, they cannot be found in the country on election day, "civic duty being something for the drivers and maids to perform." He opined that the renewed involvement of Forbes Park's "*mapuputing kamay*" has nothing to do with principles, or the "new politics" or good governance but it is "a crusade against Jojo Binay who does not belong to their class, since he comes from the then Culi-Culi, now Pio del Pilar." He asserted that "they don't like Jojo Binay, never had and probably never will."

* * *

Binay asserted that the Forbes Park group shouldn't train their guns on his congressional candidate Locsin, who is "highly competent and qualified," and that if they really feel strongly against him (Binay), they should put up a "credible candidate" instead of a former actor who turned in a "forgettable performance as vice mayor." Binay also asserted that the corruption charges raked up by his critics and opponents every election constitute the same "tired list" and that he prefers to submit himself to the Sandiganbayan's jurisdiction instead of the court of public opinion, which is "colored by the biased actions of these pretenders to the throne of self-righteousness and moral ascendancy." "Instead of the perfumed crowd, give me Makati's '*amoy pawis*' anytime," says Binay.

* * *

Reading through Binay's letter reminded me so much of the deposed President whom the controversial former mayor ardently supported to the end: they have both cleverly exploited the class issue. But just as the moneyed crowd gave Erap the benefit of the doubt that he could make a good president after he was elected, in the beginning it was ready to give the plebian mayor every chance to disprove their qualms about him. Both cases came to a parting of ways with the moneyed crowd on the issue of graft and corruption. It would be good for Binay, however, to answer the charges raised against him, instead of merely calling them a "tired list." But he's correct in one aspect: he still has a stranglehold on the vote-rich poorer Makati.

* * *

Several knowledgeable people have raised the importance of expanding the tax base, if the economy is to move forward. In last month's issue of "Alert," the publication servicing multinational firms here, Economist Intelligence Unit (Philippines) chief Peter Wallace points out that the Philippines is about a decade behind in infrastructure development among the countries in the Asian region. What compounds this problem is that this is especially true in areas of the country so mired in poverty, which could really use the pump-priming. Wallace asserts that this infrastructure lack may be ascribed, in part, to low government revenues, which, in turn, is partly due to "weak tax administration."

On the other hand, columnist Alex Magno ascribes the huge budgetary deficit inherited by President Macapagal and estimated at about P225 billion, not so much to overspending but a "glaring failure in revenue collection." He cited a study that the government collects only 50 centavos of every peso tax due. Magno argues that poor collection stemmed from the exemption of select friends of Estrada from proper taxation, as well as the need to redesign the tax system and reinvent the tax agency if corruption is to be reduced.

* * *

In this connection, I'd like to plug for a very smart senatorial candidate of the People Power Coalition, former Internal Revenue Commissioner Liwayway Chato, who could conceivably do a lot about our problem of poor tax collection, simply because she knows this field very well. She recently told me that if elected she would file various legislative measures that would address this problem, such as expanding the current small tax base. Chato knows from experience that government would be hampered in its drive to improve tax collection if it's not empowered by Congress with tax reform measures. You can also bet that Chato would also seek ways to protect the government against tax cheats, as she wrestled with some of the powerful and prominent ones during her BIR tenure.

* * *

Paris-based artist Sandra Palomar, daughter of a good friend of ours, Filipino West Point graduate Gus Palomar, will hold a most unusual art show in Clark Museum in Pampanga starting today up to April 6. Sandra will present an hour-long, three-part performance titled "Harana 9" at 4 p.m. on Thursday, April 5. In the performance she will build a shelter with indigenous materials, sing a religious Latin hymn repeatedly from within this shelter and sculpt some 15 kilos of carrots into the shape of flowers, to be laid outside the shelter. The drawings that will accompany her performance will be viewed at the Clark Museum from April 2-6.

Sandra trained with performance artist Marina Abramovic. For details, contact Ceferina Yepez at 045-599-2832, or Dr. Marietta Baccay, Tel. No. 861-07-22.

No compromises yet with Democrats on tax cut

NEWS ANALYSIS

Tom Raum

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush promised to reach out to Democrats. But other than a few get-acquainted sessions and nicknames, he has kept his distance as he works to steer his $1.6-trillion tax cut to passage.

He does not want to have to compromise before it is absolutely necessary.

That approach worked well in the House, where he could ignore Democrats and still win support last week for a budget laying the groundwork for his 10-year tax cut. House Republican leaders command strong party discipline despite their thin margin of control.

Besides, House Democrats have grown used to being ignored. They often suffered the same treatment under former President Clinton.

It is another matter in the evenly divided Senate, where Bush's first big test of leadership comes this week when senators take up their version of the budget plan.

Only Vice President Dick Cheney's constitutional tie-breaking authority gives Republicans the advantage in the Senate. And not all 50 Senate Republicans support Bush's tax plan. Some party moderates hope to scale it back.

Seizing an opening, Senate Democrats have latched onto a plan by Sen. Joseph Lieberman, a Democrat from Connecticut, and others to give every taxpayer an immediate $300 rebate check $600 for couples.

The simplicity of the plan, designed to give quick jolt to a sluggish economy, was attracting increasing support by week's end.

The administration fears a rebate plan might erode support for the longer-term reduction in tax rates at the heart of the Bush plan.

Bush signaled he might accept a rebate scheme, if tied to the longer-range overhaul. "The two ought to go hand in hand," he told reporters late last week.

In a pep talk at a Republican luncheon, Cheney appealed to Republican senators to rally behind the Bush tax cut, urging those with concerns about the size of the tax cut to put aside their reservations for now.

So far, Bush has done little in the way of aggressive outreach to Senate Democrats on the budget, say those in both parties.

His goal is clear: get it through the House as quickly as possible, then wage the tough battle in the Senate.

He has traveled the country trying to build support for the plan, sounding alarms about the economy and reminding Americans the current slowdown began on his predecessor's watch.

Quick action by Congress could give Bush's presidency an enormous boost—and let him take credit for the inevitable upturn.

"I think the American people begin to understand that we're going to do this, and we're going to deliver," House Speaker Dennis Hastert, a Republican from Illinois, said after a White House meeting.

So eager was Bush to get the tax cut through the House that he essentially ignored a would-be bloc of allies: the conservative Blue Dog coalition, 33 Democrats who champion fiscal austerity and debt reduction.

The group sought to work with the White House on modifications to the tax cut to make it more fiscally sound. But Bush did not need their advice and did not want any changes.

"The polls are showing support for the Bush tax cuts ebbing. People understand that the economy is dipping down," said Rep. Jane Harmon, a member of the coalition. "And they want something realistic to happen here."

In the Senate, a bipartisan effort is under way to create some kind of "trigger" or "circuit breaker" that would roll back the tax cut if the projected surplus failed to materialize.

One advocate, Sen. Ben Nelson, got a plane ride home on Air Force One when Bush recently visited Nebraska—and a nickname from Bush, "Nellie."

But he got little in the way of encouragement from the administration on his proposed tax circuit breaker, spokesperson David DiMartino said. "Despite discussing it with them, there hasn't been much working together," he said.

Sen. Max Baucus, a Montana Democrat, the top Democrat on the Senate finance committee, also got a nickname, "Maxie," from Bush in Montana last week.

But despite initial overtures from the White House, "the early signals haven't panned out into larger conversation," said Michael Siegel, a spokesperson for the finance committee minority.

Still, Siegel added, "Nobody's willing to suggest the door's been shut."

Bush has been able to work with Democrats on other issues, notably education and trade.

"There is no reason why a president who campaigned on this concept of being a uniter, not a divider, would not be engaged in trying to unite the Congress now as we try to resolve these budget issues," said Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle, a South Dakota Democrat.

But Bush has indicated he is not ready to bargain before he has to.

Asked why he was not willing to exhibit more flexibility on the size of his proposed tax cut for those in the top tax bracket, Bush told reporters, "See, you're trying to get me to...negotiate with myself."

AP

Epistles at dawn, Rizal duels Pastells

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

"EL ERMITAÑO" is an 1893 terra cotta figurine sculpted by Jose Rizal, shortly after being cast into exile in Dapitan, for writing what were then branded by the authorities as subversive pornographies and obscenities. His fictional depiction of real-life rapes, plunder and oppression in the Philippines is in a long line of literary and artistic exposés that still scandalize those who would rather shoot the messenger than hear the message. (In his case, they actually did, using the same logic of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo about the use of the state's police power to protect the general welfare.) I saw it recently for the first time at the National Museum in a tour of the remade institution by museum consultant and old friend, John L. Silva.

"El Ermitaño" deserves commentary now because it was mute witness to the titanic intellectual struggle between Rizal and his beloved Jesuit mentor, Fr. Pablo Pastells. They conducted an exchange of letters, or epistolary, on religion, art, nature and revelation, in those bygone days just before the dawn of the Philippine republic, a debate still going on today. Pastells was trying to recover Rizal, his "strayed sheep," for the Catholic Church, from which he had already been excommunicated, Pastells failed miserably in this regard, as he later admits. Rizal's "shipwreck of faith" was a declaration of personal independence.

The five letters from Rizal, and the four from Pastells, came between September 1892 and June 1893. Portions were published by Retana in the early 1900s and by Teodoro M. Kalaw in "Epistolario Rizalino" in the 1930s. But the authoritative work is by Raul J. Bonoan S.J. ("The Rizal-Pastells Correspondence," Ateneo de Manila Press, 1994), based on the complete texts, which are found in the Arxiu Historic S. I. de Catalunya, the Jesuit archives in Sant Cugat del Valles, Barcelona.

The material in the Jesuit archives did not become available for scholarly work until Father Bonoan was allowed access to them in 1988. Why? Perhaps, because the epistolary is more incendiary and subversive in its own way than even the "Noli Me Tangere" and the "El Filibusterismo." Over the years, the novels have been rendered in films like Marilou Diaz-Abaya's "Rizal." She may have titillated some sick people with that bedroom scene between Padre Damaso and the naked wife of Capitan Tiago, the mother-to-be of a future Maria Clara. Following the recent logic of the President, could not films like hers be blamed for the recently reported rape of nuns and civilians by some priests unable to withstand the unnatural deprivations of celibacy? Instead, it won the acclamation of church and state and most of society. Why? Because it was politically correct in subtly insinuating that at the very end, Rizal retracted his anti-Catholicism and died with rosary beads in hand. But read Rizal dueling Pastells and judge for yourself.

The epistolary is not subject to such easy historical revisionism as Abaya's. That old debate about Rizal's alleged retraction is a silly one in the light of these letters. No one who reads them could possibly misunderstand the man and his innermost convictions about religion, science, art and freedom. His retraction was, and is, a prevarication by his enemies. The letters prove that his childhood's faiths were subsumed into a grander conception of morality as a continent of the individual conscience, not a precinct in the dictatorship of some theocracy. In it, one finds him speaking unequivocally for himself, teaching with the enlightened mind of a civilized man. He duels passionately, but even-handedly with Pastells, using the rapiers of logic and the pistols of a philosophy that respected but transcended, his adversary's own. The Rizal-Pastells correspondence should have been made required reading in the 1950s, when Claro M. Recto and Jose Laurel earned the ire of the Catholic Church for passing a law doing so for the two novels. Ms Macapagal might have been saved from her present folly.

The controversies that surrounded Rizal's novels prefigured today's tempest over Jose Reyes' film, "Live Show." Today, the same civil and religious authorities are blaming those who mirror life in their works, for the horrible realities they depict. Yet, they have no moral authority, courage or justification to bring criminal charges against the directors and producers. It's just politics, no principles. Ms Macapagal and Jaime Cardinal Sin, merely reprise the roles of the Spanish governor general and the archbishop of Manila in banishing the film to the land of censorship. The President's actions were a culpable violation of the Constitution, a holier-than-thou conspiracy, no matter how hard she hides behind sanctimonious cassocks or smiling casuistry.

But there is one big difference between those days and now. If the President, the cardinal and their posse of prudes, think that we shall be wringing our hands, mourning over the loss of our freedoms, they are sadly mistaken. It is they who will be exiled to a Dapitan of everlasting disdain. Neither they nor a pathetic little Board of Censors under Anding Roces is in any position to dictate what anyone can watch or read or listen to anymore. We can choose catechisms or apostasies. Technology and democratic advances everywhere have seen to that. We shall take the chaff with the wheat and hold our own counsel for the difference. We shall not be sheep to would-be shepherds like the howling moralist Manoling Morato.

Rizal has become the hermit of our national consciousness, a state symbolized by his sculpture, entombed behind glass with its forlorn aspect. Our intellectual life stares out at us from the depths of "El Ermitaño's" haunting visage, supine in the shallow seas of our present mediocrities. But the divine spark of his art and science still lights the dark and marks the way to the future.

Special column for OFWs

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

TIME and again, this column has received letters suggesting that a column or section in the newspaper be reserved to ventilate the views or comments of certain sectors of our society.

These sectors—the disabled, senior citizens, farmers and overseas Filipino workers—believe their concerns have not been given the attention that they rightfully deserve. For them, the occasional publication of their "letters to the editor" is insufficient.

They want a forum within the pages of the Inquirer where they can regularly inform the public of their problems and the possible solutions and their stand on current issues.

Last week, reader Cathy Ledesma wrote this column to call attention to the unpleasant situation OFWs find themselves at present as the nation prepares to elect a new set of national and local leaders on May 14.

She wrote: "I am a member of the elagda-OFW group which is working to bring the concerns of our overseas Filipinos to the urgent attention of our government, beginning with getting the Absentee Voting Law passed within the next three years so that our 'modern day heroes' can vote in the 2004 elections.

"However, the government has so far only given mostly token appreciation for their contribution. With around seven million Filipinos abroad, this is a sector of our society that has given so much to our country but has gotten so little in return.

"The loneliness, abuse and neglect that they face every day are all too painful and shocking. During the *jueteng* crisis leading up to the impeachment trial, the Inquirer has seen how much online traffic was generated by these Filipinos abroad—they care about what is happening here. Do we care as much about what is happening to them out there?

"Would it be too much to ask the Inquirer to give them a regular space in your paper so that we, at home, can truly know the struggles of our working class overseas? If you can give young and old people a space to write about anything, I hope your paper will find it in your hearts to give a much-needed voice to an invisible sector whose stories are no less heartbreaking and real."

Moral authority

There is no question that our fellow Filipinos who had to leave the country to earn a living that the government cannot provide deserve to be heard or read. They are heroes in the real sense of the word. Without the millions of dollars they regularly remit, the country would have gone the way of basket case African nations.

Unless they have given up their Filipino citizenship and sworn allegiance to another country, these expatriates have every right to demand special treatment from the government and media.

The Filipinos who are compelled by economic (not personal or social) circumstance to live elsewhere in the world without abandoning their identity as citizens of this country have the moral authority to criticize the government for its shortcomings, complain loudly when their interests are neglected, or demand the sacking of officials who fall short in the performance of their duties and responsibilities.

While the Inquirer acknowledges that OFWs are entitled to the attention they have repeatedly asked for, there are certain constraints that prevent it from acceding to the request for regular space.

The editor in chief said she has no objections to setting aside a column that is exclusively devoted to OFWs. Unfortunately, the opinion-editorial pages are already fully booked. Giving the OFWs the space requested would require the removal of existing columns that handle subject matters of equal importance.

Neither would it be feasible to put up an extra page just to accommodate the OFW column because of the high cost of newsprint. The extra page has to be "subsidized" by a sufficient volume of advertisement to justify the additional expense, something which is quite difficult to accomplish considering the existing economic difficulties.

She explained that from time to time the Inquirer publishes letters or articles written by OFWs. Some of these manuscripts even became the basis of front-page news or extended editorials.

She noted, however, that many of the materials submitted do not find print because they are very long. It is not uncommon to receive articles that can fill half a page. Editing them to meet the newspaper's space requirements would give rise to the loss of important facts or comments that the writer may feel passionate about.

Fresh ideas

There is also the question of sustainability that an OFW-exclusive column has to contend with. According to a member of the editorial staff, to sustain reader interest in a column, it is essential that its contents are fresh or updated. On account of the limited area of concern of the OFWs, it is not far-fetched to think that after the 10th article, the column may just repeat its discussion of matters that have been earlier taken up.

The existing columns that, for example, deal with law, politics and economics, have a wide repertoire of subjects that can be discussed or commented on by their respective columnists depending on the issues or controversies that arise from day to day.

Unfortunately, the same element of variety and versatility cannot be said of an OFW-exclusive column. This is not to downgrade the quality of the OFWs' grievances or complaints, but there will come a time when due to repetition the column may turn back, rather than encourage, public concern about the subjects close to the heart of expatriate Filipinos.

The Inquirer would like to assure the reader, and the Filipinos living or working in various parts of the world, that their letters or articles will find print in the newspaper whenever their subjects are timely, truthful and conform to existing editorial standards.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

Taming hecklers

"I extend my hand of friendship even to the enemy."

—Rep. Joker Arroyo to the hecklers in Cagayan de Oro

No way

"If you are an upright, principled person, you cannot take the decadence, intrigues and corruption in government."

—Militant leader Teddy Casiño on his decision to turn down offers to work for the government

By default

"For bad men to succeed all it takes is for good people to do nothing."

—Jose Luis Alcuaz of the Silent Protest Movement

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Shape of things to come

ONE of the greatest faults of Fidel Ramos' administration was the secrecy with which it cloaked the terribly conceived and counterproductive concessions it gave in the guise of autonomy (but actually virtual sovereignty) over huge tracts of Mindanao territory to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Now the Communist Party of the Philippines, National Democratic Front and New People's Army obviously are demanding the same concessions. This time under the guise of a unilateral withdrawal of the government's military forces from areas covered by the recent Suspension of Military Operations (Somo).

In fact there is yet another concession, albeit willy-nilly and not deliberately nor willingly awarded by the government to the CPP-NDF-NPA. It is the fact that with the decriminalization more than 10 years ago, of mere membership or loyalty or assistance to the CPP and its affiliate organs and front organizations, such groups and individuals like the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Bayan Muna and Kilusang Mayo Uno leaders have been operating openly and now campaigning for political representation by themselves or under the party-list system but with the added benefit of being able to be funded by the revolutionary taxes and other extortionate means of collecting funds by the CPP-NPA. And so this highly anomalous situation has been copied by Gringo Honasan's RAM cohorts in the 1995 elections and so too by the MILF and Moro National Liberation Front, particularly Nur Misuari. Remember the latter could even lawfully come and go to Metro Manila's five-star hotels with hundreds of his heavily armed bodyguards!

These Marxist ideologues are tough hombres who thus far have bested even Ramos and all his National Defense, Command and General Staff College-trained retinue of military and civilian advisers, a number of whom still perform the same role for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo today.

And so Ms Macapagal should be sternly reminded that this search for peace will certainly be no picnic, nor is there a foregone happy ending awaiting her, just because Joma Sison had flatteringly congratulated her and promised to sit down again for peace talks with the government. And that any concession given must be also justified and acceptable to the majority of our citizens and not just come as a fait accompli.—**EDUARDO B. OLAGUER, Aurora Milestone Bldg., 1045 Aurora Boulevard, Quezon City**

Alleged LRT discrepancies explained

IN HIS column last March 8, Neal H. Cruz accused me of "mismanaging" the LRT Line 1 operation when it was held by the Metro Transit Organization Inc. (Metro). All he used as basis was a letter (fed no doubt by a party interested in becoming Light Rail Transit Authority administrator) supposedly coming from some Metro employees (who and how many, he did not say).

He mentioned as two of my supposed sins: (1) the alleged illegal disbursement of P3.9 million owing to the Metro employees' cooperative; and (2) the P200,000 "discrepancy in daily revenue collections" allegedly discovered after my term that, for effect, Cruz simplistically extrapolated to a fantastic P72 million government loss a year!

The first could be believed only by one who has no understanding of the funding system imposed on Metro by the management contract it had with the LRTA. Metro, a private corporation wholly owned by the government, operated and maintained Line 1 with a measly P19.5-million capital fund, beefed up each year by some P30 million advances from the LRTA. To keep this fund rolling, Metro would bill the LRTA its disbursements for labor, power and other operating and maintenance costs twice a month, and the LRTA would reimburse Metro the billed expenses.

Among those that Metro regularly paid out of the reimbursements was the cooperative, as Metro management was being used (without a fee) by the credit cooperative in collecting the loan payments from employee-members. When Metro's operating contract was not renewed following the strike in July 2000, all such reimbursements were stopped and money and pieces of property held by Metro were ordered turned over posthaste to the LRTA. Thenceforth, the LRTA took charge of paying Metro's financial obligations direct to contractors, suppliers and employees. For reasons only the LRTA knows, payment to the cooperative has not been made to date.

If there was "malversation" in this arrangement, no amount of explanation can change Cruz's perception. But for him to infer from this that my management track record was in question is to carry the conclusion too far.

The second accusation is utterly baseless. Metro's every transaction was regularly audited both by the LRTA and the Commission on Audit. Neither that alleged P200,000 discrepancy in daily revenues nor Cruz's extrapolated P72-million government loss in a year ever figured in any COA audit report. Not during my term. (Incidentally, it was during my first full-year term in 1997 that LRT revenues rose to P1.2 billion from P700 million the previous year, after I successfully implemented the fare hike from P6 to P10 in late December 1996. After Metro, it is reportedly down to less than a billion pesos again.)

As for the discrepancy's alleged discovery after the LRTA took over operation, this is what I can say: It is the classic discovery that could likely come about only if some ignoramuses would simplistically look at the collected amount from the daily token sales and compare it with the number of tokens dropped by passengers into the turnstile machine for the day. Then, when they found that there were more tokens in the entry token boxes than there was money collected to match the number, they concluded that government had been cheated.

But of course, that kind of discrepancy can happen. It happens many times because the tokens in circulation are much larger in number now since Metro was selling from one to five tokens per passenger. Passengers who bought more tokens than they would use for a day would keep the extra tokens for some other day. It is possible, though not probable, that on a given day there might be no token sale, hence no revenue, yet there would be passengers dropping tokens into the entry boxes.

It could likewise happen that more revenues than the number of passengers in a given day would be recorded.

I should pity Cruz for allowing himself to be misled by some ignoramuses, except that it's my name and reputation that had been vilified when he wrote about the malicious allegations fed by these ignoramuses.—**MOISES S. TOLENTINO JR., former general manager, Metro Inc., Quezon City**

LETTERS

Proposition for debate

WHEN the first successful cloning of an animal, actually a sheep named Dolly, was revealed some years ago, I said to myself, science is now treading dangerously into God's exclusive domain: the creation of life. But wait until science clones human beings. That would really be the day!

Today, moral theologians warn precisely of the danger of cloning human beings. As a Catholic, I believe what my Church has taught me that the Almighty creates unique human beings and infuses them with their own individual souls. And therefore, the act of cloning human beings may be an attempt to supplant God, himself, in the very fundamental act of creation.

I am told, however, that the cloning of human beings starts from the scientific culling of human cells for cultivation into other human beings. What is short-circuited in the cloning process is the sex act that results in the birth of children of the parties. Cloning will bid goodbye to man's crucial part and woman's vital part in the procreation of children. In short, cloning will replace the sex act as an indispensable component in the process of breeding other human beings.

But will cloning create human beings—humanoids—without souls? I doubt it. What I remember of my Jesuit education is that the soul inhabits every part of a living human being. Now if cloning means getting living cells from a human being for cultivation into another human being, I would think that the soul of the subject person inhabiting the cells would continue to dwell in the body of the new person.

What is probably more worrisome to our theologians is the fact that with the loss of the necessity of sex as a prelude to the birth of other human beings, cloning may further endanger morals for the reason that now sex may then be resorted to as an act of pure pleasure of the parties and no longer for purposes of procreation.

As a Catholic holding a public office, I seek a public debate on the issue of the cloning of human beings.—**AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL JR., Senate president, 5th Floor, Senate of the Philippines, GSIS Building, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City**

Worthy to be a party-list group

THIS is in reply to the column of Rina Jimenez-David last March 7, 2001.

To clarify once and for all, the Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga (MAD) is not a government-sponsored organization and Richard Gomez does not represent any government agency or office.

Executive Order No. 61 dated Jan. 15, 1999 created the National Drug Enforcement and Prevention Coordinating Center (DEP Center) principally tasked to orchestrate the drug enforcement efforts of all the national government agencies, local government units and nongovernment organizations for a more effective anti-drug campaign.

Recognizing the need for the general public's support in this fight against illegal and prohibited drugs, then DEP Center executive director, Jewel F Canson, organized MAD, a multi-sectoral, anti-drug movement set up primarily for spreading drug awareness.

This explains why the "questioned billboards," which carry the telephone numbers of police stations for purposes of reporting drug pushers or drug activities, seem to have given the impression of a connection between MAD and the government. But we should know that billboards cannot be used as the sole basis in determining whether or not an organization or corporation is of the government.

Lastly, emphasis must be given to the fact that Richard Gomez is not MAD and neither is MAD Richard Gomez. Being a multi-sectoral group, the board of trustees of MAD is composed of Canson, Alfonso Policarpio, Rodrigo Cornejo, Ofelia Carague, Teresita Ang See, German Moreno, Melquiades Robles, Miguel Ortigas, Jerson Samson, Norma Urbina, Kathrina Rallanka, Romualdo Maranan, Lyle Parreno and Constantino Navarro III. This lineup would be sufficient to show that MAD is composed of a group of people who have joined efforts for a serious cause: to help the country fight a very serious problem, and is worthy indeed of being accredited in the party list.—**CONSTANTINO L. NAVARRO III, Suite 1504, The Centerpoint Condominium, Julia Vargas Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City**

Update Fort Santiago markers

THE NEW Spanish Ambassador to the Philippines, Tomás Rodriguez Pantoja, had his first visit to the San Agustin Museum last week. He was accompanied by Victor Guash, president of the Agencia Española de Cooperacion Internacional.

I had the honor to welcome him and to show him around the various halls of the museum. Needless to say, he was very much impressed by the rich collections of Filipino, Spanish and Chinese cultural heritage housed therein.

A tour of Intramuros followed. I took him to several places of interest in the Walled City, like the old Ateneo, the Intendencia Buildings, the Aduana, the statue of Philip II inaugurated in 1998 by Queen Sofia of Spain and some parts of the beautifully restored "*murallas.*" Lastly, we visited Fort Santiago and paid a visit to the shrine of Dr. Jose Rizal.

As we read the text of the historic markers of the different structures of the Fort, one thing struck my attention powerfully and, I must admit, sadly. The names of all the countries which had, through the years, significant historical contact with the Fort, one way or another, are there. However, not even once is the name of Spain mentioned in any of the markers, supposedly the mirrors where we can see the history of the country.

For an objective and fair appreciation of the existing friendly relations between the Philippines and Spain, may I suggest that these markers be updated following generally accepted standards of history.—**PEDRO G. GALENDE, OSA, director, San Agustin Museum, Intramuros, Manila**

Chato not linked

FOR TRUTH and to keep the record straight, my lawyer never linked senatorial candidate (and former Internal Revenue commissioner) Liwayway Chato to the SMC tax scam. We never alleged that Chato committed the same offense for which I was charged.

The exact words of the motion for reconsideration was: "The case of Commissioner Chato is also in point. No case has been filed by the Ombudsman against Commissioner Chato for non-collection of the alleged deficiency tax due from SMC. This, despite a formal complaint filed with said office re the said case."—**BIENVENIDO A. TAN JR., Unit 7A, The Valero Tower, Valero Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City**

Making power reform bill an election issue

WE commend and applaud Puwersa ng Masa senatorial candidate Juan Ponce Enrile for taking out a full-page advertisement in the INQUIRER and several other newspapers to bring to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's attention his incisive and revealing thoughts on the "perils of the anti-people, anti-consumer provisions of the proposed Omnibus Power Act."

We thank Enrile for being one with us in opposing the Meralco stranded costs, imposing the absolute ban of cross-ownership between generation and distribution, enforcing strict safeguards against market domination and strengthening of the consumer's voice in utility regulation.

We take particular note of the senator's strong legislative support for our opposition to Meralco's P0.30 rate hike petition to the Energy Regulatory Board (ERB) by declaring illegal the practice of charging Meralco's income tax to consumers, and by introducing investment equity as a factor in determining the returns for utility business. With this, we will no longer have to slug it out with Meralco at the ERB at every turn, as what happened with the P10.8-billion (perhaps now close to P20 billion) refund and P0.167 per kwh rate rollback of 1998 and with this P0.30 per kwh increase now being heard and opposed.

Up to Item No. 9, Enrile is clearly championing consumer interest.

But in Item No. 10, under his mistaken notion of "Fairness to Electric Cooperatives," Enrile perpetuates, abets and condones a system that many rural electric cooperative members consider oppressive and intolerable. We had written and pleaded with Enrile in the past, to bring to his attention the plight of electric cooperative members who can least afford yet pay the highest electricity rates, compared to their urban counterparts.

We asked Enrile to work for the registration of the rural electric cooperatives with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) in accordance with Republic Act 6938 as registration will have the natural effect of repealing Sections 3 and 5 of Presidential Decree 1645 and recognizing consumer ownership of electric cooperatives. Enrile has up to now ignored our plea.

Perhaps he is being misled by clearly entrenched special interest groups in rural electrification, because if he is talking about "time to adjust," the rural electric cooperatives have been having their heyday for the past 27 years, with no clear member benefits to show after all that time.

In our case in Leyte, the Leyte Electric Cooperative II (Leyeco II) members won a P0.41 per kwh rate reduction, but implementation has been put off because of the legal maneuvers of clearly entrenched special interest groups in rural electrification.

While Enrile worries about the "takeover" of cooperatives, its real owners who are the cooperative members are deprived by these clearly entrenched special interest groups from exercising their rights of ownership.

In the Senate and bicam hearings on power reforms, the National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms Inc. (Nasecore) had been forthright and categorical in demanding reforms in the rural electric cooperative sector, but senators like Enrile have chosen to sweep those reforms under the rug by blithely providing that the old mandate of the National Electrification Administration (NEA) under PD 269 and PD 1645 would be carried through under the so-called power reforms in rural electrification.

As we have tirelessly pointed out to Congress, Enrile included, the martial powers of the NEA under the twin decrees stunt the growth of electric cooperatives into "potent institutions of rural development."

It is perhaps not curious that the senator makes no mention of the stranded costs of the National Power Corp., which Nasecore demands must be reviewed on prudence, legality and regularity. Is Enrile's silence on this major issue borne out of his support for Section 60 of the draft bill, which creates a "rural electric cooperative stranded cost" by condoning all loans of all cooperatives, in effect letting those who mismanaged those loans go scot-free by wiping the slate clean for them? As with our demands on the Napocor's stranded cost, there should be a thorough review of all those NEA and cooperative loans. While we support condonation of these loans, we demand accountability for them.

The NEA loans have been the convenient excuse for not recognizing the patronage and capital contributions of cooperative members. And the loans, too, have been an excuse for overcharging cooperative members, as was the case in Leyeco II, where the cooperative collected P28 million in one year but remitted only P5.2 million, thus the refund ordered by the ERB.

We therefore appeal to Enrile to be wary of the clearly entrenched special interest groups that apparently now surround him, and are poised to hoodwink him.

The members of Nasecore have been making the rounds of key regional areas to share what we have learned on rural electrification. Enrile's full-page advertisement has shown us the way to making electricity an election issue, thank you!

An empowered consumer will certainly be guided into voting members of the Senate and House who are power literate. As rural communities wake up to the abuses and exploitation they have been victim to under the NEA martial regime, we expect major headways in consumer empowerment.

We hope Enrile will listen closely to the plight of cooperative members and obtain his feedback minus the distortions of clearly entrenched special interest groups.

As Nasecore does not have the financial resources for full-page advertisements, aside from the fact that it does not aspire for any Senate seat, its members hope you will publish this rejoinder in your letters' section.—**PETE L. ILAGAN, president, National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms Inc., Unit 616 Roxas Seafront Garden Townhomes, Roxas Boulevard corner Ortigas Street, Pasay City**

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
JOB MARKET
Career Fair 2001
It's where you'll find the BEST

The INQUIRER's Job Market has again lived up to its mandate to bridge the gap between employer and job seekers. The Job Market Career Fair 2001 offers you the biggest opportunity to find a career. Come to the Glorietta Activity Center on April 23 to 25, 2001 and file applications with more than 200 leading corporations. Come to Job Market Career Fair 2001 – it's where the brightest people find the best jobs.

AYALA CENTER
VillMan
Wendy's
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The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

Wahid rejects power-sharing plan

WAHID

JAKARTA—President Abdurrahman Wahid has rejected calls that he immediately surrender much of his power to his popular deputy as a way of avoiding impeachment by the hostile parliament, a newspaper reported Sunday.

Some legislators who are critical of Wahid said last week that he should enter into a compromise to end a long-running political crisis and assign the day-to-day running of the troubled nation to Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri.

In the past Wahid has himself raised the possibility of reducing the powers of the president.

However, The Jakarta Post newspaper quoted presidential spokesperson Adhi Massardi as saying Wahid contended that such a change could only be enacted by amending the Constitution. And that this could not be done until after the president's current term ends in 2004.

Currently, Wahid acts as Indonesia's head of state as well as its head of government.

The compromise proposal, put forward by parliament's speaker, calls for this dual role to be split now with Wahid remaining as president, but only with a largely ceremonial role.

Megawati has not commented publicly on the plan. However, senior officials in her party have openly rejected it. Many of them want Wahid to quit in favor of her.

"The move should not only be motivated by a desire to topple the president," the paper quoted Massardi as saying.

"The Constitution can not be tampered with simply because Gus Dur is the president," he said in reference to Wahid's popular nickname.

The likelihood of impeachment moved a step closer last Wednesday when Wahid addressed parliament to answer a Feb. 1 censure motion against him. He flatly denied allegations of corruption made by lawmakers and questioned the constitutionality of efforts to oust him.

Legislators will decide at the end of the month whether to censure him for a second time.

If they do, he will be obliged to appear before the assembly again. If, at that time, the lawmakers again reject his response, they can launch impeachment proceedings.

Wahid has been implicated by a parliamentary inquiry in the illegal transfer of $4 million from the state food agency by a former business associate. He is also accused of failing to declare a $2 million aid donation from Sultan Hasanal Bolkiah, the ruler of neighboring oil-rich Brunei.

Wahid, Indonesia's first freely elected head of state following four decades of dictatorial rule, assumed office in October 1999.

He has been sharply criticized for his failure to curb corruption, prosecute key figures in Indonesia's former authoritarian regime and reform the country's ailing economy. He also has been unable to stop outbreaks of ethnic and separatist violence. *AP*

Albanian rebels enter Macedonia, fight with army

SKOPJE, Macedonia—Ethnic Albanian rebels slipped across the Kosovo border Saturday and engaged Macedonian troops in a firefight, the Army said. Macedonia's prime minister acknowledged that the guerrillas still posed a military threat despite a weeklong drive to stamp out the insurgency.

A military spokesperson in the former Yugoslav republic said there were no casualties on the Macedonian side in the early-morning exchange of fire, but the Army said it was checking unconfirmed reports that one of the guerrillas was killed.

A rebel commander reached by mobile telephone said he was not aware of new fighting. But he said guerrilla units were operating independently in the mountains along the frontier and were not always able to stay in close contact with one another.

US troops patrolling the border, meanwhile, detained 30 men suspected of being ethnic Albanian rebels crossing from Macedonia into Kosovo, US spokeswoman Capt. Alayne Cramer said Saturday.

The men, who Cramer said were "military age," were detained Friday in several groups. Also found with one group of men were several machine guns and sniper rifles, along with ammunition, Cramer said.

The Nato-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo this week stepped up its efforts to help seal the frontier against rebel infiltration, but the rugged terrain makes it difficult to secure.

Word of renewed fighting came only a day after the Army declared success in its drive to flush the insurgents from strongholds in the hills along the frontier.

The firefight broke out before dawn and continued sporadically for hours near the village of Gracane, about 10 kilometers north of Skopje, the Macedonian capital, said military spokesperson Col. Blagoja Markovski.

He said a force of about half a dozen rebels had made their way across the border from Kosovo and began sniping at a Macedonian army watchtower at Caska, near the Blace border crossing. The Army responded with mortar and small-arms fire, he said.

Also Saturday, the Macedonian military said it had completed a mine-clearing operation in the Sara mountains above Tetovo, Macedonia's second-largest city. Last Sunday, the government rolled in tanks and heavy artillery and pounded suspected rebel positions in the steep hills overlooking the city.

Most civilians in the ethnic Albanian villages in the area had fled their homes before the government assault began. Some of the refugees are sheltering in Macedonian towns and villages away from the fighting; others made the arduous trek across mountain passes into Kosovo.

The government said its offensive was meant to drive the guerrillas out of the country before talks with leaders of the country's ethnic Albanian minority. It has refused to negotiate directly with the rebels, whom it considers terrorists who want to split up Macedonia. *AP*

Blair claims win in war on FMD

LONDON—Prime Minister Tony Blair's spokeswoman said Saturday that Britain is beginning to win its battle against foot-and-mouth disease, but the number of outbreaks continued its steady rise as Blair pondered whether to vaccinate some cattle.

"We are beginning to punch our weight on the ground," said the spokeswoman. "This is undoubtedly going to be a long haul, but we are determined to keep the pressure on through the work of the military . . . to deliver real change."

The army stepped up its involvement in the fight against the disease this week, sending slaughtermen to help clear the backlog of animals earmarked for culling. Agriculture officials hope the speeded-up slaughter will stem the spread of the disease, but they announced early Saturday that more than 60 new cases had been confirmed in the 36 hours since Thursday evening.

The Agriculture Ministry changed the way it releases information, so a direct comparison is difficult, but that appeared to be a steeper jump than in previous days, when the number of infection sites—now 846—had increased by between 30 and 40. Four more new cases were announced later Saturday.

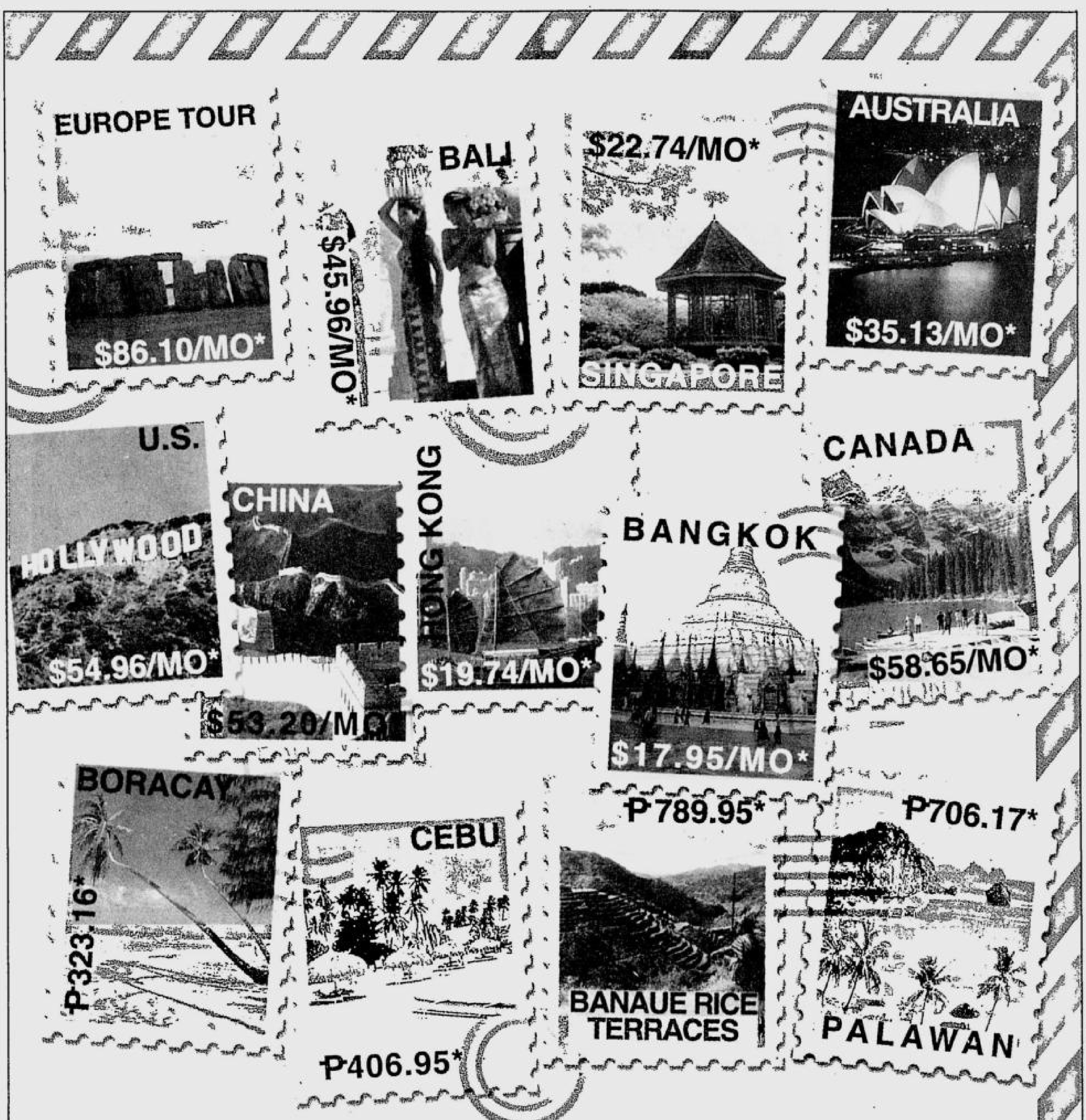
Prof. Roy Anderson of Imperial College in London told The Guardian newspaper that a daily case total close to 60 would mean efforts to stop the disease's spread were having little effect.

"There are some encouraging signs in the epidemic," he said.

"This week is crucial. If the cases this weekend stay around the 30 or 40 mark, or even a little bit higher—the 50s is all right—that's good news. If they don't, there's a lot more effort to be made."

Disposal of culled animals could soon be quickened to help halt the epidemic. Agriculture Minister Nick Brown said Saturday that an independent medical report has cleared the way for cattle under 5-years-old to buried instead of burned.

Cattle were previously always burned because of fears of spreading mad cow disease—a fatal brain-wasting ailment scientists fear can be transmitted to humans—into the water supply. A ministry spokesman said a final decision on cattle disposal is expected within days.



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Cherry blossoms feast draws thousands

WASHINGTON—Thousands of spectators braved cool and wet weather to turn out for the National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade on Saturday.

The parade, one of the highlights of a two-week festival that celebrates the friendship between Japan and the United States, comes four days before the projected peak bloom of 3,000 Japanese cherry trees lining the Potomac River tidal basin.

Most of the pink and white blossoms were originally forecast to be out by March 31, but cooler temperatures have kept most of the trees from blooming, according to the National Park Service.

At the parade, poncho-wearing spectators sat in lawn chairs and stood under umbrellas on Constitution Avenue to see giant balloons and marching bands from as far away as Texas, Florida and Alabama.

"It's a little cold and we tried to dress for the weather, but I still had a good time," said Crystal Gaines of Cheverly, Md., who made the annual trip to the parade with her 6-year-old niece and 12-year-old son.

Brief morning showers kept about 30 percent of the usual crowd away this year, said Jennifer Richmond, spokeswoman for Dowtown Jaycees, a volunteer group that sponsors the parade. *AP*

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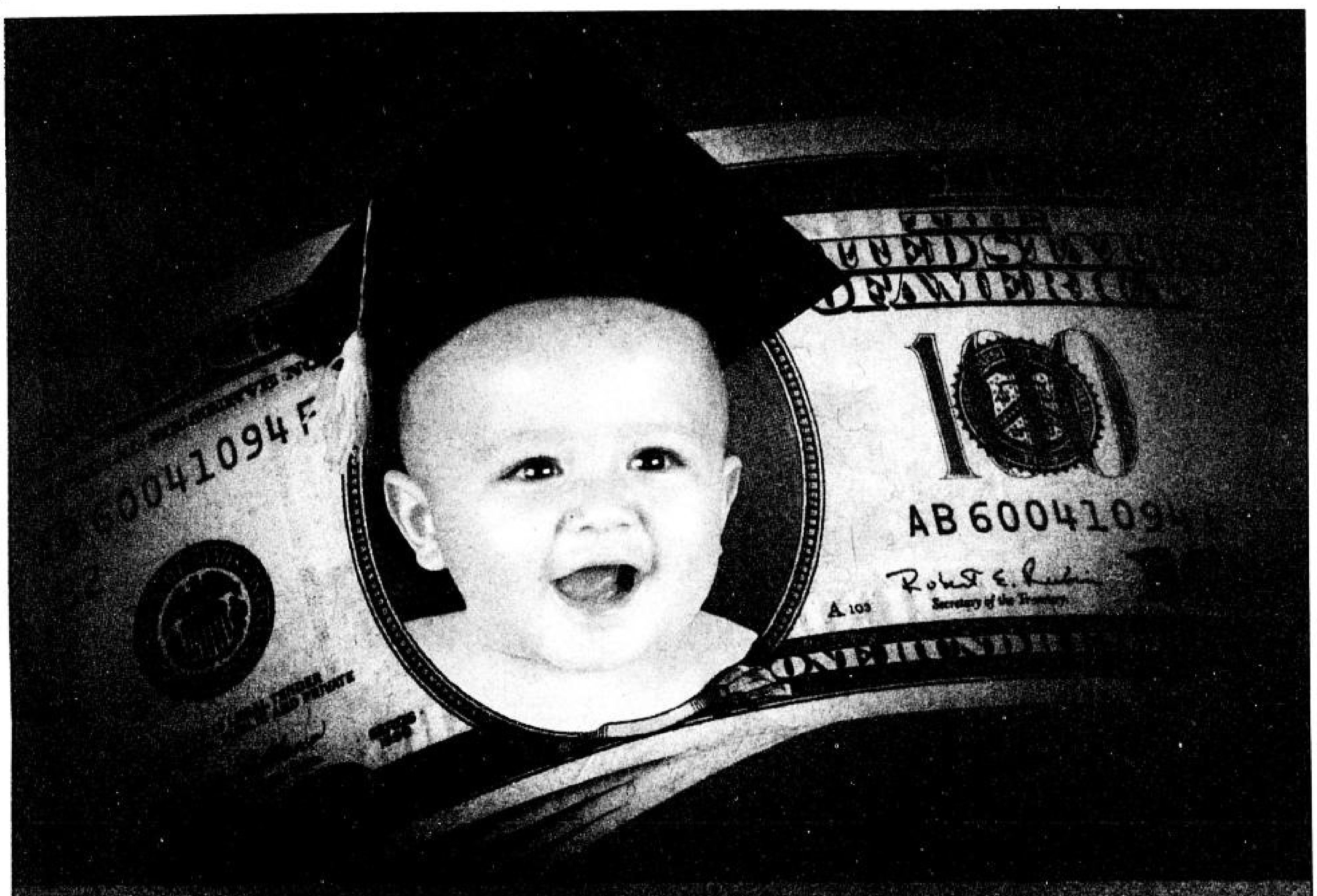
JULIA Kohles, 2, and her older sister Kaylee, 4, from New Jersey, enjoy snowcones as they watch the Cherry Blossoms Parade on Constitution Avenue, Washington, March 31. AP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US seen turning tough vs China

SEOUL—Just over two months into the Bush administration, a perception that US foreign policy is turning hard line is perturbing a few allies and rattling former Cold War adversaries in Northeast Asia.

The new White House talks tougher than its predecessor. But views are divided over whether the tone signals fundamental policy shifts or reflects an assertive effort to carve out a new identity on the international stage.

Bush's actions in Northeast Asia have come under particular scrutiny as Japan and South Korea, which play host to tens of thousands of American military personnel, watch the evolution of US policy toward China and North Korea.

In South Korea, there is concern that blunt US demands for tangible acts of reconciliation from North Korea have worsened a slowdown in President Kim Dae-jung's peace negotiations with the repressive North.

The communist regime in North Korea is smarting over Bush's decision to suspend Clinton-era talks on curbing the North's missile program pending a review, and has threatened to pull out of nuclear and missile accords with Washington.

New sheriff

"Bush is telling the world that they have a new sheriff in town," said Kim Song-han of the state-funded Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security in Seoul, the South's capital. He predicted that US policy will "start out tough and then tone itself down."

Many world leaders currently assess Washington through the lens of Bush's enthusiastic support for a US missile defense system, a controversial project that has contributed to his credentials abroad as a hard-liner.

Critics of the multibillion-dollar idea, whose future was far more cloudy under Clinton, fear it could trigger an arms race.

"There's more of an attitude (in Washington) of, 'This is what we're going to do and everybody has to adjust to it,'" said Victor Cha, a Korea expert at Georgetown University in Washington. But a "definite direction" in US foreign policy has yet to emerge, he said.

Clinton's emphasis on trade with China at the expense of human rights and Taiwan's status made for relatively smooth ties between Washington and Beijing.

Now, though, there is potential for discord: A decision is expected in April on US arms sales to Taiwan, which China strongly opposes as an impediment to its efforts to regain control of the island. And Washington is urging Beijing to release Gao Zhan, a US-based scholar accused of spying. *AP*

Sri Lanka concert bombed; 11 killed

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka—A bomb exploded during a concert at a stadium in Sri Lanka on Sunday, killing 11 people and wounding at least 158 in a crowd of thousands, doctors said.

At least 25,000 spectators were packed in a sports stadium in Kurunegala, about 100 kilometers northwest of Colombo, when the bomb exploded early Sunday, a local police officer said on condition of anonymity.

Doctors at the town's main hospital said 11 dead bodies were brought in and 156 people were being treated for wounds, including shrapnel injuries. The doctors spoke on condition they not be identified.

An Associated Press photographer who visited the site saw hundreds of shoes and torn clothes strewn over the area. He saw at least three unexploded homemade bombs.

A police officer at the site said he heard two bombs going off in quick succession. The explosions triggered a stampede that led to the high number of casualties.

The explosion appeared not to be linked with this small tropical island country's civil war between the government and the separatist Tamil Tiger rebels. Police blamed it on criminal gang warfare.

Thisharika Lakmali, a spokeswoman for the Shree FM radio station in Colombo said earlier that six people died on the spot. Fifteen of the wounded were in serious condition, she said.

The concert featured musicians from neighboring India. The identities of the victims were not immediately known.

Police said no arrests have been made.

The radio station organized the show as part of its advertising campaign ahead of Sri Lanka's traditional New Year that falls in April. *AP*

Netherlands 1st country to recognize gay weddings

AMSTERDAM—Four gay couples exchanged rings and vows at Amsterdam's City Hall on Saturday in the first same-sex marriages recognized by any country.

Amsterdam Mayor Job Cohen officiated at the ceremony for three male couples and one female couple, which took place immediately after the law permitting gays to wed took effect at midnight.

It was the denouement of a 15-year campaign to allow gay couples equal rights under civil law. The legislation easily passed through both houses of Parliament last year.

Standing around a semicircular conference table, the couples held hands as Cohen went one-by-one asking if he or she accepted his or her partner as spouse.

"And now we have the marriage of two men and two women," Cohen said to conclude.

A packed meeting hall burst into applause, but all eight newlyweds stood awkwardly, unsure what to do until Cohen told them they could congratulate each other. Then they kissed and embraced.

He distributed a ring to each partner, then asked each to sign a marriage registry. "In the Netherlands, we have gained the insight that an institution as important as marriage should be open to everyone," he said in brief remarks concluding the event.

Getting used to

One witness, Philip Vos, remarked on the momentousness of the occasion. "I'm gay, but even I'm going to have to get used to this," he said.

Foreigners hoping to get married in the Netherlands will be disappointed. Only Dutch nationals or resident foreigners living with a Dutch partner will be eligible for same-sex marriages.

Before becoming Amsterdam's mayor two months ago, Cohen served as the government official involved in drafting the legislation.

Shortly before the ceremony, Cohen told reporters he believed that Dutch law would encourage other countries to assess their views on gay marriages.

The couples were welcomed by applause from family and supporters as they arrived for the ceremony, but a handful of demonstrators protested against what they called an unnatural union.

"We hope these people will chose to return to the Lord," said Cor de Vries, a 30-year-old protester.

Both women were dressed in wedding gowns with long trains. Four of the men wore formal suits and bow ties, and one couple was outfitted in leather. The ceremony was broadcast live on an Amsterdam television channel.

One couple, Louis Rogman and George Jansen, has been together for 36 years.

Artificial insemination

The women, Anne-Marie Thus and Helene Faasen, have a 9-month-old son, whom Thus gave birth to after artificial insemination.

"We are so ordinary, if you saw us on the street you'd just walk right past us," Anne-Marie Thus said in an interview before the wedding.

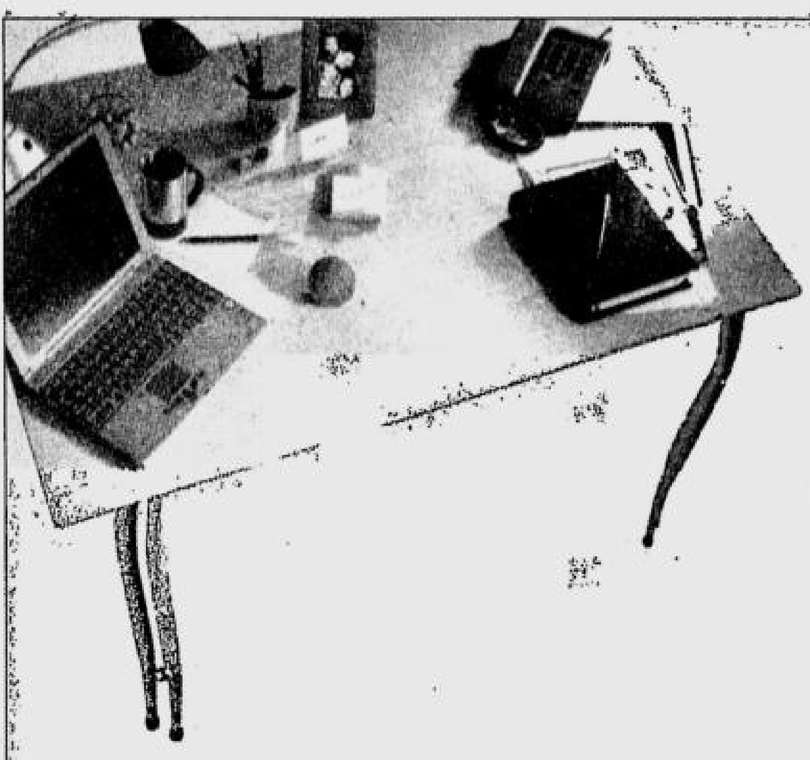
"The only thing that's going to take some getting used to is calling her 'my spouse,'" she said from her Amsterdam home.

Gays have enjoyed general acceptance here for years and public surveys show that more than 75 percent of the population supported the equal rights bill.

In Amsterdam, gay pride is celebrated annually with a carnival and parade through the city's famed canals, with tens of thousands of people watching and cheering the colorful floats.

The weddings consolidates the Netherlands' position at the forefront of social liberalization. Last year it legalized brothels and decriminalized euthanasia. The sale of marijuana and hashish is tolerated at coffee bars.

Gays won legal rights with the decline of political power by the traditional religious party and the formation of the first wholly secular coalition in 1994. That government passed legislation allowing gays to register as partners.



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Baguio City road project to cut 7,000 pine trees

BAGUIO CITY—The Baguio circumferential road project, which was touted to solve the traffic gridlock in the city, will destroy the award-winning watershed project of Happy Hallow Village and require the cutting of more than 7,000 century-old pine trees, a private foundation here said.

The Jaime Ongpin Foundation Inc., project proponent of the Happy Hallow watershed rehabilitation project, said the damage to be brought by the road project is more than devastating.

"The negative implications on the (watershed) project, the community and the whole of the city were just too huge to disregard," a JVOFI report said.

The road project, also known as the Western Link, is said to cost around P300 million and will pass through Asin Road, through the village of Balacbac and Camp 7, before it traverses Happy Hallow.

The project would then link up with the main road near the Baguio Country Club. It is a flagship project of Baguio Rep. Bernardo Vergara, who is now running for mayor.

The Department of Public Works and Highways said the project contractor has already started earthmoving activities for the project but has to call it off on Feb. 2 pending the issuance of an environmental compliance certificate.

An initial consultation with some residents did not bring out the case of the Happy Hallow watershed rehabilitation project.

Residents who joined the consultation said they would be displaced or their vegetable gardens would be destroyed by the project.

Mayor Mauricio Domogan, who initiated the consultation, said the government is ready to institute remedies to help affected residents including compensation for destroyed gardens and property.

He said some residents have voluntarily donated their lands to give way to the project.

The condition of the watershed project was not discussed. The project, now benefiting 270 families in Happy Hallow, will be cited by Australian Ambassador John Edward Buckley this month for exemplifying innovative development approaches to sustainable environmental preservation.

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), through the Philippine-Australia Community Assistance Program (Pacap), the Baguio Water District, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Baguio Regreening Movement are supporting the project.

Residents in Happy Hallow rehabilitated the barangay's 30-hectare watershed area and planted 8,000 tree seedlings of various species. They also put up two nurseries capable of maintaining 20,000 tree seedlings in the village. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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NPA rebels vow to hunt, capture, punish Manero

DIGOS CITY—New People's Army (NPA) rebels operating here and in nearby North Cotabato have started to flex their muscle in a bid to locate convicted priest killer Norberto Manero Jr. alias Commander Bucay.

Manero escaped from the Sarangani provincial jail on March 22. Manero was convicted of the murder of Italian priest Tullio Favali in Tulunan, North Cotabato in 1985. In 1999, then President Joseph Estrada granted Manero conditional pardon, but revoked it following a public outcry.

Manero is also facing kidnapping and double murder cases for the abduction and killing of brothers Ali and Mambatawan Mamalumpong in 1977.

But the Magtanggol Roque Command of the NPA Front 51, in a statement, said it would not turn Manero over to authorities.

"We will arrest him for the crimes he committed against the people and we will let the masses punish him," the rebel group said.

Manero, who has been the object of a nationwide manhunt by the police and military, has set at least four conditions for his surrender, including the restoration of the pardon granted him by then President Estrada.

President Macapagal earlier announced that Manero was willing to surrender even if the government does not grant his demands. But Manero's wife Julie Yee said her husband has not dropped his demands.

The NPA said it is verifying reports that Manero has quietly slipped into Davao del Sur from Bukidnon over the weekend, and is now being coddled by a member of the now defunct Ilaga, an anti-communist armed group which Manero helped found in the 1970s.

"The reports we are receiving are very positive," the rebel group said.

Manero's alleged location is very near this city, according to the NPA but it did not name a particular place.

During his stint as the commander of the notorious Ilaga, which was integrated into the Barangay Self-Defense Unit and eventually the Civilian Home Defense Force, Manero was a regular visitor of Davao del Sur, particularly in the hinterland barangays bordering North Cotabato, South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat.

He did not set up base here but maintained close ties with local Ilaga members led by Ligaya Buco alias Commander Inday.

The NPA suspects that Manero is just trying to ease the tension brought about by his escape and will eventually surface.

"Anywhere, we will not hesitate to arrest him and finally bring him to trial so that he could pay for his crimes," the rebel group said.

Meanwhile, a senatorial candidate of the People Power Coalition criticized the police and military for failing to locate Manero.

In a statement, former Sen. Ernesto Herrera said even as the military, the police and the National Bureau of Investigation vowed to hunt Manero, TV reporters in General Santos City early this week were able to track down the convict and conduct an interview with him.

"What does this tell us? That the authorities are blind and incompetent while reporters have deeper and more reliable sources? What has happened to the intelligence funds of the AFP, the PNP and the NBI if they cannot even track Manero down even as reporters easily could?" Herrera said.

The former senator also said rumors are rife in Mindanao that Manero and his wife Yee were assisted by people believed to be policemen in the convict's escape last week from the Sarangani provincial jail.

"If these rumors are true, then this might explain why the authorities are having such a hard time arresting the killer of Fr. Tullio Favali," Herrera said. *Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Vice gov says drug money to flow in Masbate polls

MASBATE CITY—Masbate Vice Gov. Mario Espinosa yesterday said the illegal drug problem has grown so rapidly in the province that he feared drug money might be used by some politicians to win in the May 14 elections.

Espinosa told the INQUIRER that the preferred drug in Masbate is shabu, which is very cheap and readily available to them.

"There are towns like Placer and Cawayan where one can buy shabu in *sari-sari* stores at P50 per sachet," he said in the dialect.

A big volume of the drug is regularly dumped in the province from Cebu, Samar and Metro Manila, he said.

"In fact, we are supplying the Bicol mainland where a sachet of shabu costs between P300 and P500," Espinosa claimed.

Among the major traffickers of shabu in the Bicol peninsula is reportedly an operator of a chain of pawnshops who is known among cockfight aficionados as a big gambler, he added.

Espinosa said he suspected that some shabu manufacturing laboratories might already be operating somewhere south of Masbate's main island.

Sources said hundreds of hectares of crab farms and fishponds are being used as fronts for this operation in San Fernando and Cataingan towns.

These drug laboratories are reportedly guarded by heavily armed goons from Muslim Mindanao under the protection of a high government official.

This report, he said, is further boosted by the suspicious presence of known Chinese drug dealer Lawrence Wang and some Taiwanese in the province posing as businessmen and tourists.

He claimed that Wang had particularly been seen in fishing trips with a top government official.

He reportedly spent two years in the Taguig drug rehabilitation center with this official as co-inmate.

Espinosa said the presence of these Taiwanese as tourists in Masbate is suspicious since the province is hardly attractive to foreigners.

They also do not own property or have legitimate businesses in the province.

He said what causes more concern is that many other public officials in the province are somehow involved in the manufacture and trafficking of illegal drugs.

On the take from drug money are some of the highest officials in the provincial government, the military and the police, the vice governor claimed.

The more notorious of them, he said, are members of the police narcotics command, who are allegedly involved in the street hawking of shabu.

It is not remote that drug money will be used to finance goons and vote buying in the coming elections, he said.

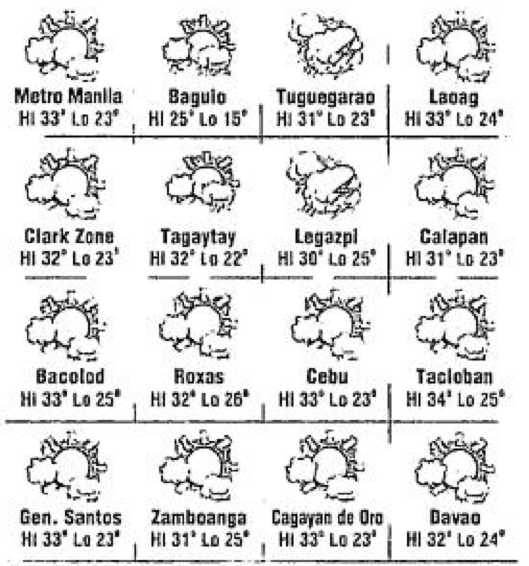
Because of this, he said the elections might be marred by more violence and irregularities.

Roly Embile, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA



Metro Manila Hi 33° Lo 23°	Baguio Hi 25° Lo 15°	Tuguegarao Hi 31° Lo 23°	Laoag Hi 33° Lo 24°
Clark Zone Hi 32° Lo 23°	Tagaytay Hi 32° Lo 22°	Legazpi Hi 30° Lo 25°	Calapan Hi 31° Lo 23°
Bacolod Hi 33° Lo 25°	Roxas Hi 32° Lo 26°	Cebu Hi 33° Lo 23°	Tacloban Hi 34° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos Hi 33° Lo 23°	Zamboanga Hi 31° Lo 25°	Cagayan de Oro Hi 33° Lo 23°	Davao Hi 32° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Loyesa, PDI Research

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Bets called to meet on trash

DIGOS CITY—The Commission on Elections (Comelec) will meet candidates and their supporters to discuss post-election matters, particularly the removal of campaign paraphernalia.

Meriam Remolleno, city election assistant, said suggestions that politicians and their supporters clean the litter caused by their posters and streamers would be taken up during the meeting, which would be scheduled very soon by city election officer Francisca Martin.

"The idea is very good. We will try to present it to the candidates and their supporters," she said.

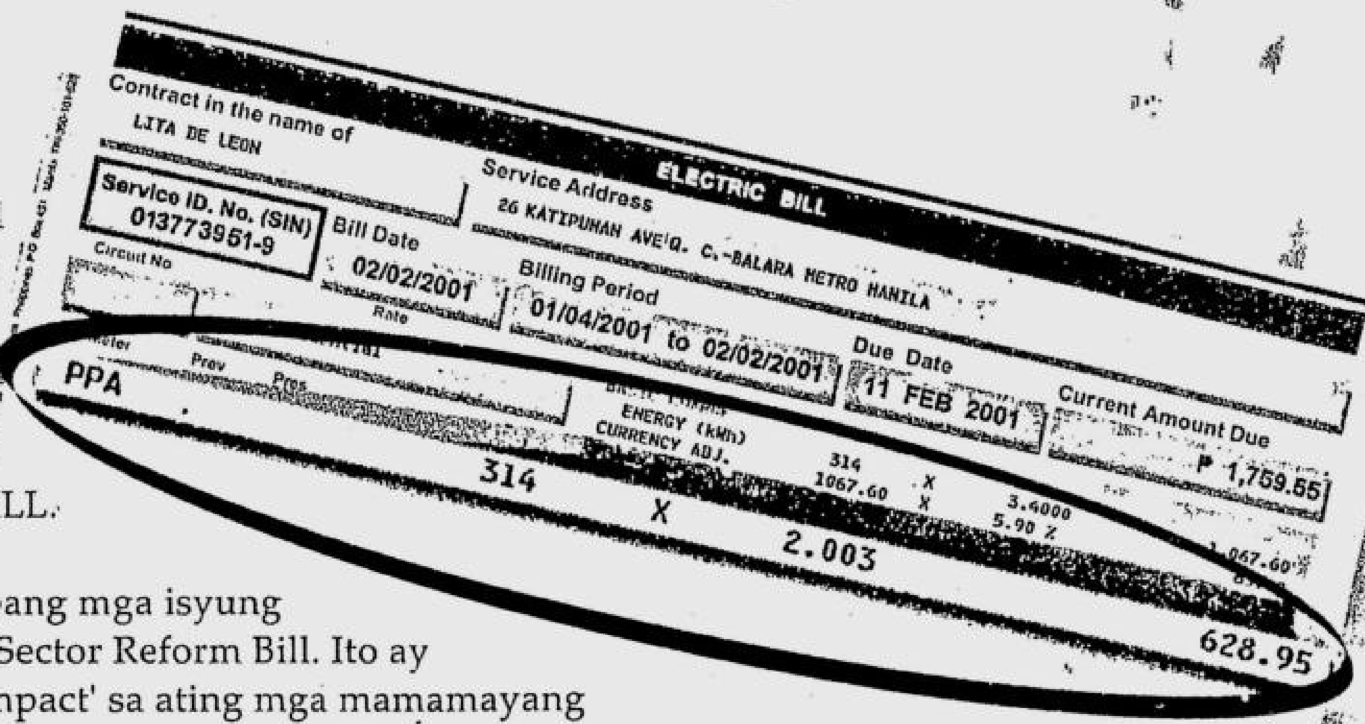
Candidates usually leave the removal of their campaign paraphernalia to the Comelec, which in turn would request the police and the Bureau of Fire Protection for assistance.

"They're not as energetic as when they were posting their campaign paraphernalia when we talk of cleaning their litter," Remolleno said.

"I guess it would be easy for us to call in the candidates because they are always accessible. The most we could do, however, is only to suggest. We could not compel them because there is no law penalizing politicians who would not clean their litter," Remolleno said. *Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ISANG BUKAS NA LIHAM MULA KAY SENADOR JUAN PONCE ENRILE

at Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives (APEC)


Contract in the name of
LITA DE LEON
ELECTRIC BILL
Service Address
26 KATIPUNAN AVE Q. C.-BALARA METRO MANILA
Service ID. No. (SIN)
013773951-9
Bill Date
02/02/2001
Billing Period
01/04/2001 to 02/02/2001
Due Date
11 FEB 2001
Current Amount Due
P 1,759.55
Circuit No
Rate
Meter
Prev
Pres
PPA
ENERGY (kWh)
CURRENCY ADJ.
314
1067.60
X
X
3.4000
5.90 %
1,067.60
314
X
2.003
628.95

Mahal na Pangulong Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo,

Kami, kasama ng sambayanang Pilipino ay malugod na nagpapasalamat sa inyong pagtugon sa isyu ng Power Purchase Adjustment o PPA. Ang inyong pagsususpinde ng pagbabayad ng PPA ay napakalaking ginhawa sa bulsa ng mamamayan at tunay na isang positibong hudyat ng inyong masusing pag-aaral ng POWER SECTOR REFORM BILL.

Nguni't sana po ay huwag nating isantabi ang iba pang mga isyung dapat talakayin bago ipasa ang panukalang Power Sector Reform Bill. Ito ay mga isyung may malawakan at pangmatagalang 'impact' sa ating mga mamamayang kumukonsumo ng kuryente, at gayundin sa mga kooperatibang nagsisilbi sa power sector. Ilan sa mga ito ay ang sumusunod:

ABUSO	Ang pagkakarga ng iba't ibang "charges" na walang kinalaman sa halaga ng pagpoprodyus o pagkonsumo ng kuryente nguni't ipinapasa sa consumer sa ngalan ng PPA. **Para sa kaalaman ng lahat -** > Sa likod ng **Power Purchase Adjustment** o **PPA**, nakakarga ang overpriced contracts ng NAPOCOR at Meralco sa pagbili ng kuryente mula sa mga independent power producers (IPPs). > Ang PPA ay umaabot na ngayon ng P2.21 / kWh, o halos 1/3 ng ating total monthly bill sa kuryente. > Ang isang average household ay maaaring magbayad ng P200 hanggang P1,000 na PPA charges bawa't buwan. > Tinututulan ito ng mga electric cooperatives subali't kinakasangkapan sila upang kolektahin ang PPA.
BANTAY-ABUSO	Suriing mabuti ang mga charges na kasama sa PPA at tiyakin na ang karampatang charges lamang ang babayaran ng mga consumers. I-review ang mga kontrata sa mga IPPs upang alisin ang mga di-makatarungang provisions nito at ilantad ang overpricing ng kuryente sa ilan sa mga kontratang ito.
ABUSO	Kung ang electric distributor at generating companies ay nasa pag-aari ng iisang korporasyon lamang, ito ay magiging sanhi ng posibleng *price manipulation* at *unfair competition*.
BANTAY-ABUSO	Limitahan ang pagbili ng distributor mula sa generating company kung ang dalawang kompanya ay nasa pag-aari ng iisang tao, pamilya o korporasyon. Hindi dapat lumampas sa 30% ng requirement ang kuryenteng maaaring bilhin mula sa 'sister company' ng distributor.
ABUSO	Ang isang distributor tulad ng Meralco na kumokontrol ng halos 70% ng Luzon requirement, ay bumibili ng kuryente sa isang generating company tulad ng First Gas. Ang dalawang kompanya - na ang pag-aari ay kontrolado ng isang pamilya lamang - ay lumalagda sa tinatawag na *bilateral agreement*. Ang negosasyong ito ay hindi dumadaan sa *open bidding* kaya't maaaring maganap ang *price manipulation*.
BANTAY-ABUSO	**Open bidding** ang kinakailangan upang mapangalagaan ang interes ng mga mamamayang kumukunsumo ng kuryente.
ABUSO	MONOPOLY ang umiiral sa industriya ng kuryente, na imbes na makabuti, ay lalong nakasasama sa kapakanan nating mga consumers.
BANTAY-ABUSO	Limitahan ang pag-aari ng isang generating company nang hindi lalampas sa 30% ng nasasakupang "grid" at 40% ng pangangailangan ng buong bansa. Sa ganitong paraan lamang masisiguro na 'di bababa sa 4 na generating companies ang makakapag-compete nang patas.
ABUSO	Ang **Utility Income Tax** ng Meralco ay ipinapasa sa mga mamamayan.
BANTAY-ABUSO	Ipagbawal ang pagpapasa sa mamamayan ng mga buwis na hindi naman dapat bayaran ng consumers.
ABUSO	Ayon sa batas, may limitasyon ang maaaring kitain ng power utilities na nakapaloob sa Guaranteed **Return on Rate Base** (RORB). Nguni't ang totoo nilang kinikita - na kadalasa'y lagpas sa isinasaad ng batas - ay naitatago sa pamamagitan ng kargadong komputasyon at paglalahad ng kanilang Return on Rate Base.
BANTAY-ABUSO	Higpitan at gawing mas **transparent** ang paglalahad ng lahat ng elementong isinasama sa Return on Rate Base.
ABUSO	**Double family profits** ang kinikita ng mga 'sister companies' sa pagbili ng mga equipment at services sa isa't-isa. Sa ganitong situwasyon, ang paglilipat ng additional profits mula sa isang regulated business (tulad ng distribution utility) patungo sa isang non-regulated business (supplier) ay napapabayaang makalusot.
BANTAY-ABUSO	Kailangang ipasailalim sa public bidding ang malalaking kontrata sa pagbili ng equipment at services ng distribution utility companies.
ABUSO	Ang pagmamaliit sa kapangyarihan ng Energy Regulatory Board.
BANTAY-ABUSO	Bigyan ng tamang kapangyarihan ang Energy Regulatory Board at ang mga hihiranging 'regulators' upang maputol na ang mga mapang-abusong pamamaraan ng mga kumukontrol sa industriya.
ABUSO	Ang pang-iipit sa electric cooperatives sa pamamagitan ng hindi pagbibigay sa kanila ng sapat na panahon upang makapag-adjust at makasabay sa competition sa loob ng isang deregulated environment.
BANTAY-ABUSO	Bigyan ng sapat na panahon ang mga electric cooperatives upang makasabay sa competition sa isang deregulated environment. Ibalik ang tax exemption ng mga electric cooperatives at gawing higit na maka-demokratiko ang pagmamay-ari ng mga ito.

Mahal na Pangulo, hindi po madali ang tinatahak na landas ng Power Sector Reform Bill. Hindi rin po madaling banggain ang mga taong kumukontrol sa industriya ng kuryente. Subali't kung tayo ay magtutulungan, makikinabang ang sambayanang Pilipino pati na ang maliliit na kooperatibang umaasang mabigyan sila ng pagkakataong paunlarin ang kanayunan. Matagal na rin po silang nagtitiis. Mahabang panahon na rin po silang nabibiktima. Sama-sama po nating bantayan ang kanilang kapakanan.

Mabuhay po kayo, Gng. Pangulo.

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WASTE HEADACHE

FVR dike turning into dump

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Burning garbage dumped at the FVR Megadike has destroyed trees and grasses, endangering the 56-km long lahar-catching structure, regional Department of Public Works and Highways officials said.

Fires have easily spread there this summer, denuding many portions of the megadike's outer and inner slopes, said Lita Manalo, officer-in-charge of the DPWH's Mt. Pinatubo Emergency project management office.

Her office manages the structure built in 1996 to protect southern Pampanga from being buried by Mt. Pinatubo's lahar.

Criticized for building a life-saving dike filled with non-porous volcanic sediments, the DPWH, starting 1998, has covered the slopes with layers of mountain soil and urged local governments and civic groups to plant ipil-ipil trees and grass to strengthen the structure.

The burning of trash along the inner slopes has posed potential damage because trees and grasses drain the water from the Pasig-Potrero river to flow away from the foot of the dike, Manalo said.

Last Wednesday, the INQUIRER saw a dump truck of the JA Capulong Construction dumping household and construction trash at the eastern dike.

The truck bore the official sticker of the Pampanga provincial government. At the same area where the driver unloaded the garbage, a mound of trash was set on fire.

Jesus Lugue, a farmer from Barangay San Isidro in Bacolor, censured the truck driver. "This (garbage dumping and burning) has been going for three years. We (residents in San Isidro) have not been able to stop it. We have been suffering from the fumes. Plastic materials are blown by wind and reach our streams and farms," Lugue said.

Manalo is appealing to local officials in Bacolor, Sta. Rita and Porac towns to help the DPWH stop illegal garbage dumping along the dike.

She said the cooperation of local governments is needed now that the DPWH has no funds this year to maintain the dike.

The agency's available money, running to only P27 million, the balance of P119 million the Estrada administration gave for flood-control measures, is intended for desilting.

Manalo said the culprits are not village officials who oversee the disposal of garbage at the city's dump located outside of the eastern dike.

She, however, observed that a number of the city's dump trucks are not properly covered, their contents falling as they traverse the dike.

In Porac, located upstream of the dike, the INQUIRER saw trash being disposed of and burned in remote, uninhabited land along the Mancatian Road.

Personnel dumping garbage in the area confirmed that trucks of two Pampanga-based construction companies often leave wastes in Porac, hometown of Gov. Manuel Lapid.

They could not say if the garbage in Porac and along the dike came from Metro Manila.

Police rarely guard the entry and exit points leading to the dike, Manalo said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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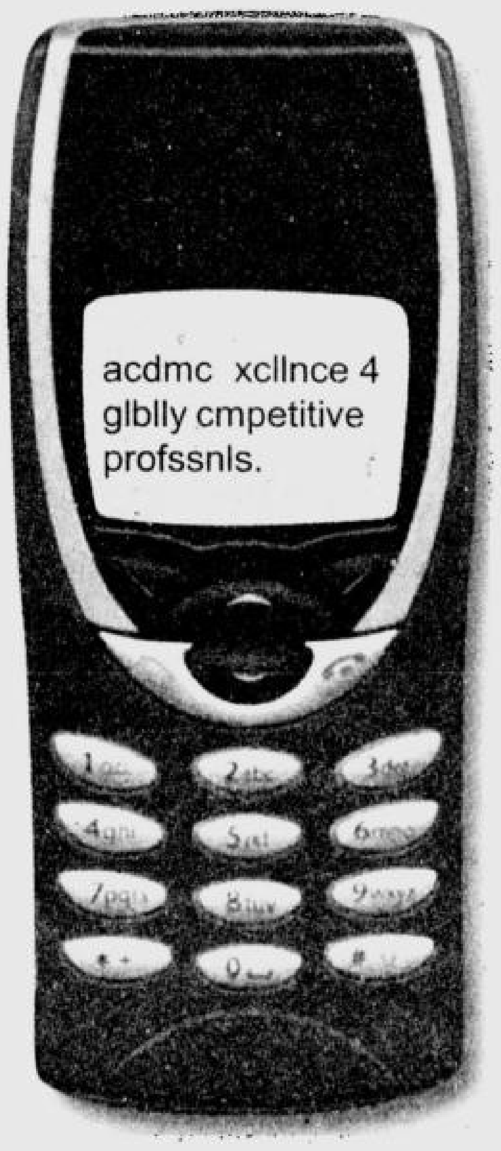

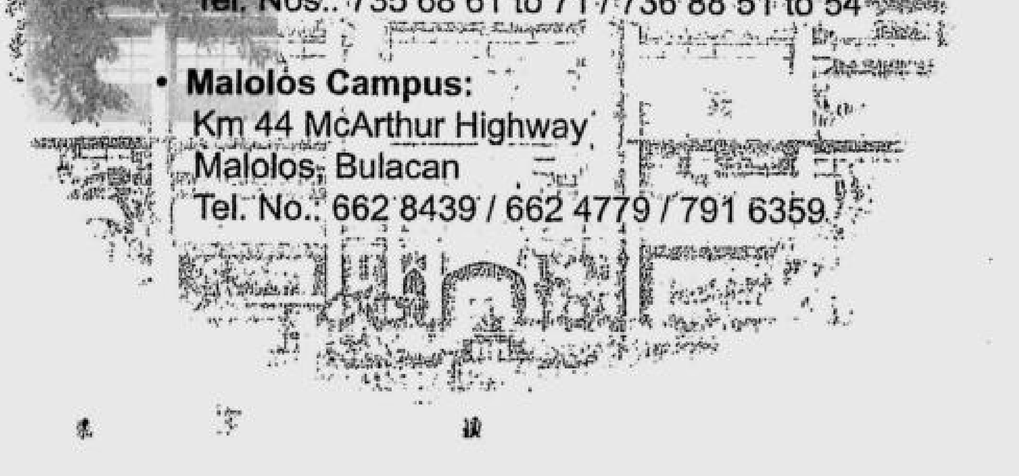

Bohol detainees await freedom

By Chito Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—Three political prisoners at the Bohol Detention and Rehabilitation Center (BDRC) are eagerly waiting for their freedom even as they reiterated the call for the unconditional release of all political detainees still languishing in jails all over the country.

"Happy," replied Romualdo Muñez, 30, of Poblacion, Catigbian town, when asked how he felt about news that he was scheduled for release.

His fellow detainee, Kim Michael Virador, 21, of Pasong, Garcia-Hernandez town, echoed the response along with Romeo Pialan, 21, a resident of Bongbong, Catigbian town.

All three were among nine people who were arrested during a military raid on a suspected rebel training camp in Sitio Dagsa, Barangay Cambaylan, Catigbian Nov. 11, 1999.

They are included in the first batch of political detainees processed for release as part of the government's confidence-building measure prior to the holding of peace talks.

"We prefer that all political detainees be released as proof that the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo is sincere," the three said in Cebuano when interviewed at the BDRC Wednesday.

The three said they would resume life as ordinary farmers after their release. The three added that they know of no other world except that of a peasant,

Muñez completed elementary while Pialan finished only Grade 4. Virador reached second year high school.

But Virador said they will not stop participating in the struggle to free their comrades who are still in prison.

"All political detainees should be released regardless of the pending cases," he said.

Muñez said life in prison was lonely, perking up only when he is visited by his wife and three-year-old son.

Virador and Pialan, who are single, had been visited by their parents.

ROUNDUP

Police officer cleared

ILOILO CITY—A multi-awarded police officer here was cleared of sexual harassment charges for lack of evidence. The Philippine National Police Internal Affairs Service in Western Visayas said there was no basis to file the charges against Chief Insp. Agustin Molina, relieved chief of the Jaro police precinct and recipient of the Ten Outstanding Policemen of the Philippines award for two years. No witness would corroborate the complaint against Molina who was accused of touching the private parts of one of three women that he and several companions met inside a restaurant here on Feb. 23.
Raj Padilla, PDI Visayas Bureau

1,200 ha to landless

DIGOS CITY—Agrarian reform officials in Davao del Sur said they would distribute some 1,200 hectares of land to landless farmers and farm workers by the end of the year. In a recent meeting, the province's 10 municipal agrarian reform officials identified 762 families as potential beneficiaries. The DAR Southern Mindanao office gave out a total of 1,653 hectares to 1,039 beneficiary-families. *Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Tobacco growers losing

CANDON, Ilocos Sur—Virginia tobacco growers in Ilocos Norte, La Union, Abra and Ilocos Sur are suffering from financial losses because of a drop in tobacco prices due to the lack of foreign buyers, a National Tobacco Administration official here said. "There is no export quota as of the moment. With no foreign buyers, tobacco prices would surely suffer," lawyer Eduardo Guirnalda, NTA director for the academe, said. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Case vs nuisance bet

MATI, Davao Oriental—A son of Davao Oriental Gov. Rosalind Lopez has filed a disqualification case against a candidate who bears the same family name. Leopoldo Lopez VII, a candidate for municipal councilor here, wants the Commission on Elections to disqualify Floradima Lopez, who is also running for councilor. Leopoldo VII said Floradima is a nuisance candidate. But no disqualification case has been filed in the mayoral race of Mati where Governor Lopez's nephew, Edgardo Lopez and daughter-in-law Maria Zorayda Lopez, are vying for the same post.
Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau

CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Bet seeks probe of solon; move tagged gimmick

ILAGAN, Isabela—Candidate for governor Manuel Syquian asked the Department of Justice and the National Bureau of Investigation to investigate reports tagging Isabela Rep. Faustino Dy Jr. as one of the alleged masterminds of a syndicate engaged in car theft and insurance fraud in the United States.

Syquian, who is facing Dy in the gubernatorial elections in Isabela on May 14, urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to endorse the case to the DOJ and the NBI.

He also appealed to the Macapagal administration to check with the US Embassy to determine the veracity of allegations that Dy was convicted of 27 felony counts for theft and insurance fraud and had only returned to the country to evade arrest by US authorities.

Dy, in a telephone interview with the INQUIRER, dismissed as "purely recycled" the charges hurled against him by Syquian.

He said any government agency could check the allegations and the results of these investigations would show his integrity as a politician.

He said if the charges were true, he should have been "blacklisted" and not been issued a visa by the US Embassy.

He said Syquian brought up the issues during the election period to damage his reputation.

"I would not bite that. For me, it is not my attitude to cull personal issues aimed at maligning one's honor," Dy told the INQUIRER.

He said he would focus his attention on the development of Isabela and do his job as a legislator until his term expires on June 30 than focus on "mudslinging."

Syquian said he brought up Dy's alleged involvement in crimes in the United States and sought the intercession of the DOJ and the NBI because he was alarmed over Dy's candidacy for governor.

Syquian said he heard Dy deny the charges over a television interview and dismiss them as "politically motivated." He said Dy had claimed that the case happened a long time ago and was already "abolished."

"How can you abolish a crime in the United States? We hope to get into the bottom of these accusations. The Filipino people, especially in our province, deserve to know the truth since he is running for governor," Syquian said.

"If these were true, we should immediately act to set an example that the Philippines cannot be used as a sanctuary for Filipinos who committed crimes in the United States," he said.

Dy's brother, Cauayan Mayor Faustino Dy III, also dismissed the allegations made by Syquian.

"We know those are fabricated, and politically motivated," he said.

Dy III said Syquian timed the report with the election period to gain publicity. "You know that the Dys will never do that. Isabelinos know better than him (Syquian)," he said.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

JPE: Gov't to lose ₱450B in power bill

NAGA CITY—As far as Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile is concerned, the power bill has run out of fuel.

Enrile said on Saturday here that the current version of the bill should not be passed because it encourages monopoly and cartels, does not reduce the domination of existing players in the power industry and does not protect power consumers.

"In fact, the present version of the Omnibus Power Bill imposes additional heavy burden on the people, especially household members," Enrile said here.

He said the privatization of the National Power Corp. would not help the country's economy any even if the state-run firm's assets were sold.

Enrile said if the total listed assets of Napocor, which were estimated to be worth at least P860 billion, are sold, only P410 billion in actual revenue will be realized.

He said the buyer of the Napocor's assets worth P410 billion would get the assets without any liabilities. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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PEACE TALKS

Herrera slams CPP 'duplicity'

FORMER Sen. Ernesto Herrera yesterday accused the Communist Party of the Philippines of insincerity in the peace negotiations with the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"I find it distressing at the very least that while President Macapagal is bending over backward to accommodate the rebels, the rebel leadership . . . is proving to be duplicitous," said Herrera in a statement.

He said while the government was willing to cease all military offensives against the communist guerrillas, the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines and National Democratic Front has ordered its cadres "to continue waging war at the same time that the NDF is talking peace."

Herrera, a harsh critic of deposed President Joseph Estrada and senatorial candidate of the People Power Coalition, warned the NDF that "such a duplicity will not escape the attention of the public."

People, he said, "would surely lose its faith in everything that the revolutionary movement fights for it (the NDF) continues with this charade."

He said the communists have the moral responsibility to reciprocate the goodwill that the Macapagal administration has shown the rebels since it rose to power through People Power 2.

"They should not forget that the President has granted their wish to release political prisoners and is even reportedly open to the idea of holding the peace talks abroad," Herrera said in his statement.

"But instead of repaying such a display of goodwill with the same sincerity (that) Ms Macapagal has been showing to them (the rebels), the communists are even trying to make a mockery of the whole peace process," Herrera said.

Such a contemptuous behavior toward the peace negotiations, Herrera said, betrays the objectives of the communists.

"You would wonder if they are really intent on waging peace, not war. It makes you think whether what they are fighting for are really the masses," Herrera said.

Herrera urged government peace negotiators to be circumspect and to be careful in their dealings with the NDF. "They (communist leaders) are wily, as this latest episode has shown," Herrera said.

He added that if the communists want the peace process to continue, they should, at the very least, acknowledge the sincerity of the government by becoming sincere themselves.

Bayan Muna hits 'Red scare' prop

DAVAO CITY—Leaders of party-list hopeful Bayan Muna have decried alleged "Red scare tactics" allegedly being used by the military and anti-communist groups to discredit them.

The Bayan Muna leaders made the statement following the arrest of a campaign coordinator whom the military tagged as a New People's Army guerrilla.

Joel Virador of Bayan Muna and secretary general of Karapatan Southern Mindanao said campaign coordinator Jun Pili was arrested recently by soldiers of the 73rd infantry battalion (IB) while campaigning in the remote barangay of Suawan in Marilog District here.

But Col. Eduardo del Rosario, chief of the Army's 73rd infantry battalion, said Pili is a member of the Armed Propaganda Team (APT) of the NPA because Army soldiers recovered a .38 cal. revolver, a hand grenade and several communist documents from him.

Del Rosario said Pili was a communist organizer. ***Jowel Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Politicos using El Niño for campaign

DAVAO CITY—The Department of Agriculture (DA) has rejected calls by politicians and local government executives to declare some areas in North Cotabato and Davao del Sur under a state of calamity.

The DA dismissed as false the politicians' claims that these places are experiencing early stages of the El Niño phenomenon.

Dennis Araullo, DA regional director here and technical director for Mindanao, said no part of Mindanao or of the country is experiencing El Niño at this time.

"In fact, some areas in Mindanao like Davao del Norte and Compostela Valley are even experiencing floods, so why should we have a drought?" Araullo asked.

Araullo cautioned the public against believing "hook, line and sinker" the calls of some local government executives to declare their areas under a state of calamity as these could be tainted with politics.

He said some candidates can take advantage of government relief and assistance distribution efforts merely by making themselves visible when these goods are delivered in areas that would be declared under a state of calamity.

Jowel Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau

SPOKESMAN PHOTO FROM PUNO CAMPAIGN

Former Press Secretary Ricardo "Dong" Puno, a former presidential spokesman, goes through a reversal of roles during a recent sortie in Butuan City as he finds himself listening to who could be a genuine spokesman of the people—an elderly man narrating his and his family's woes.

Ping asks PNP to be tough vs criminals

DAVAO CITY—Opposition senatorial candidate Panfilo Lacson said here the Philippine National Police (PNP) should be more aggressive, not gentle, against criminals in order to solve the rising number of kidnappings and other crime cases in the country.

Lacson said the police should "kick doors" to rescue kidnap victims as they did during his time when he was yet chief of the PNP and the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF).

"The way to treat this kidnapping upsurge is for the police to be more focused and aggressive in its stance. The police can't afford to be a softie," he said.

Lacson said having an aggressive stance against kidnappers especially during rescue operations should not be interpreted as a "high-handed" approach to the problem as what his critics were saying when he was still PNP and PAOCTF chief.

"What's high-handed about arresting criminals in the act of holding hostages? If it's rescue operations, what approach do you want? Will you knock on doors and ask if I could come in?" he said.

"You are looking at a victim whose life is in danger so naturally, you will have to kick doors," he said.

Lacson who once headed the operations division of the defunct Presidential Anti-Crime Commission, was implicated and investigated in the alleged rubout of Kuratong Baleleng members during the Ramos administration.

Lacson, however, said there was nothing wrong with being aggressive in the anti-crime drive and operations as long as police follow the rules of engagement and the procedures of arrest as defined by the Revised Penal Code.

"What I'm saying is you don't approach a rescue operation by being very gentle to the criminals. There are notorious criminals ready to kill their victims and ready to kill even the police officers conducting the rescue," he said.

But Lacson said it is not too surprising why kidnapping in the country today are on the rise.

He claimed that police showed laxity in performing their jobs as indicated by the presence of PNP Chief Deputy General Leandro Mendoza and his deputy in golf courses daily.

He said immediately after Mendoza assumed his post, he announced that PNP officers could already play golf even on weekdays which he strictly banned during his term. He said he only allowed PNP officers to play golf during weekends.

Even the so-called *kotong* cops and police officers' practice of using recovered stolen vehicles is back, he said.

His controversial physical fitness program campaign had been set aside. He said this development in the PNP has definitely affected police performance in maintaining peace and order in the country.

Lacson said the anti-kidnapping drive was a success during his term in the PAOCTF and the PNP because relatives of kidnap victims cooperate with them and that they aggressively pursued the cases.

Lacson also lashed at plans of President Macapagal-Arroyo to hold a "peace and order summit" to address the rising cases of kidnapping and other crimes saying these activities will not achieve anything.

"It's (peace and order summit) all talk, it's all speeches, it's all briefings, you can't achieve anything with that. What we need is a focused effort against kidnapping," he said. ***Jowel Canuday and Julie Alipala-Inot, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

A book, a campaign, a candidate for gov

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—A candidate for governor here started his 45-day campaign by launching a book on an Ilonggo hero.

Vice Gov. Demy Sonza, who is running for governor under the Lakas-NUCD, said the launching of the book "Adriano Hernandez: A Hero in War and Peace" is a tribute to Filipinos who fought for independence from the colonial rule of Spain and the United States.

Close to a hundred people attended the launching March 30 at the Sarabia Manor Hotel. Among them were descendants of Hernandez that included former Tarlac Gov. Margarita "Tingting" Cojuangco, who is Hernandez's great granddaughter.

Sonza wrote the life story of Hernandez, a Spanish *mestizo* and one of the prominent Ilonggos who secretly laid the groundwork for the revolution against Spain.

Hernandez joined the "Ejercito Liberator" (Liberating Army) organized by revolutionaries as a buck private. But weeks later, Hernandez found himself having the rank of a full colonel and leading the northern Iloilo contingent of the revolutionary Army in October of 1898.

He was credited for leading the "Cry of Lincud" on Oct. 28, 1898 where Hernandez and a battalion of *voluntarios* (volunteers) declared the start of the uprising by shouting "Viva Independencia" shortly before attacking a Spanish garrison in Dingle town, 42 kilometers north of here.

In the war against the United States, Hernandez established Iloilo's line of defense and maintained it for nine months despite waves of invasion and heavy bombardment from American battleships anchored off Iloilo City.

He fought bravely until his surrender on Feb. 2, 1901.

Hernandez became an assemblyman at the First Philippine Assembly, a governor of Iloilo and director of the Bureau of Agriculture. He died on Feb. 16, 1925.

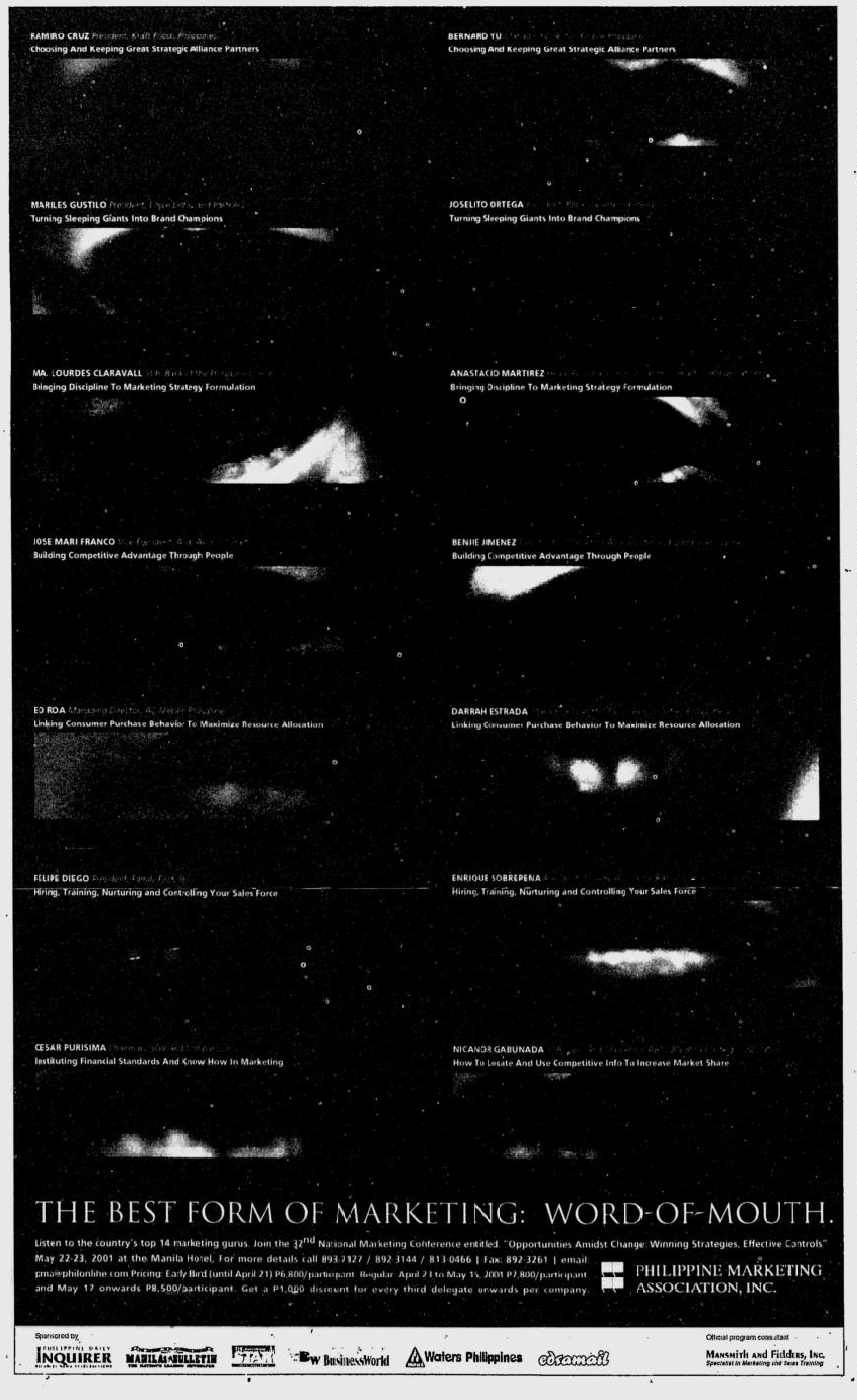
47 villages being watched

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Commission on Elections has placed 47 out of 140 barangays in Sarangani province in the Comelec watch list due to the presence of several armed groups.

These barangays are in the towns of Maitum, Kiamba, Maasim, Alabel, Malapatan, Glan and Malungon.

Lawyer Michael Abas, provincial Comelec registrar in Sarangani, told reporters that there were nine barangays in Maitum which are in the Comelec watch list, eight in Kiamba, seven in Maasim, six in Alabel, eight in Malapatan, eight in Glan and one in Malungon.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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Cops arrest ex-Yugoslav president

(From page A1)

the aid.

Police official Miodrag Vukovic said the charges against Milosevic include abuse of power and corruption that cost the state close to $100 million, and that Milosevic would face a maximum five-year prison term if convicted.

'Slobo! Slobo!'

Masked police had tried to raid the sprawling villa before and seize Milosevic before dawn Saturday but were repulsed by his guards, who opened fire with automatic weapons. During the day, hundreds of his supporters blocked the villa's gates, taunting police with cries of "Slobo! Slobo!"

Milosevic told police he would rather die than surrender, officials said. However, Branislav Ivkovic, a close aide to Milosevic, said he surrendered voluntarily "to include himself in the legal process."

Serbian Interior Minister Dusan Mihajlovic said Milosevic's 32-year-old daughter Marija fired four or five pistol shots moments before her father was whisked away. A police official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said she was apparently aiming at a government representative trying to negotiate her father's surrender.

Mihajlovic said she "was in a state of distress" over the arrest and there were no injuries.

Interrogation

Under Yugoslav law, Milosevic will be interrogated by a judge, who determines whether there is enough evidence to merit a trial. The judge can dismiss the charges, release the defendant pending trial or jail him pending completion of an investigation.

His lawyer, Toma Fila, who accompanied Milosevic to the gloomy Central Prison building, said, "certain agreements were reached," but added he saw "no chance" his client would be granted bail.

During the standoff, Milosevic frequently brandished a pistol he always carried with him. However, members of his party managed to persuade the former president to surrender after the negotiators noted that the arrest had nothing to do with The Hague indictment.

Mihajlovic also insisted that the arrest was not intended to turn Milosevic over to the tribunal, "but to hand him over to an investigative judge under domestic laws." Many Serbs consider The Hague tribunal a political instrument of American foreign policy.

Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic said the US deadline was not a factor, adding "conditioning of that kind is unacceptable for a sovereign country."

Since his ouster from power last fall, Milosevic has lived under police surveillance in the tile-roof villa built for former communist dictator Josip Broz Tito in 1978, two years before Tito died. It is said to contain secret underground passages, as well as underground vaults containing jewelry—gifts to Tito during his 36-year rule.

Bloody breakup

Milosevic rose to power in Yugoslavia during the waning years of communist power in Europe. In 1991, he triggered the bloody breakup of the former Yugoslavia, sending his army into losing wars against the pro-independence republics of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia.

At 59, the wily politician, decried by the West as the "Butcher of the Balkans," had defied the international community for more than a decade in a bloody bid to maintain Serbian control over a disintegrating Yugoslav federation.

Milosevic again tried to stare down defeat in presidential elections in September of last year, despite overwhelming evidence that opposition candidate Vojislav Kostunica had decisively won the polls.

And when, after nearly two weeks of stalemate and the desertion of many of staunchest allies he was forced to acknowledge his loss at the polls, Milosevic insisted the setback was only temporary.

But his Socialist Party of Serbia then suffered another crushing defeat in December parliamentary elections, polling only 14 percent of the vote.

While he was still in power, the Serbian, then Yugoslav, president lost virtually every battle he entered and wrought disaster on every cause he espoused.

Impoverished by war

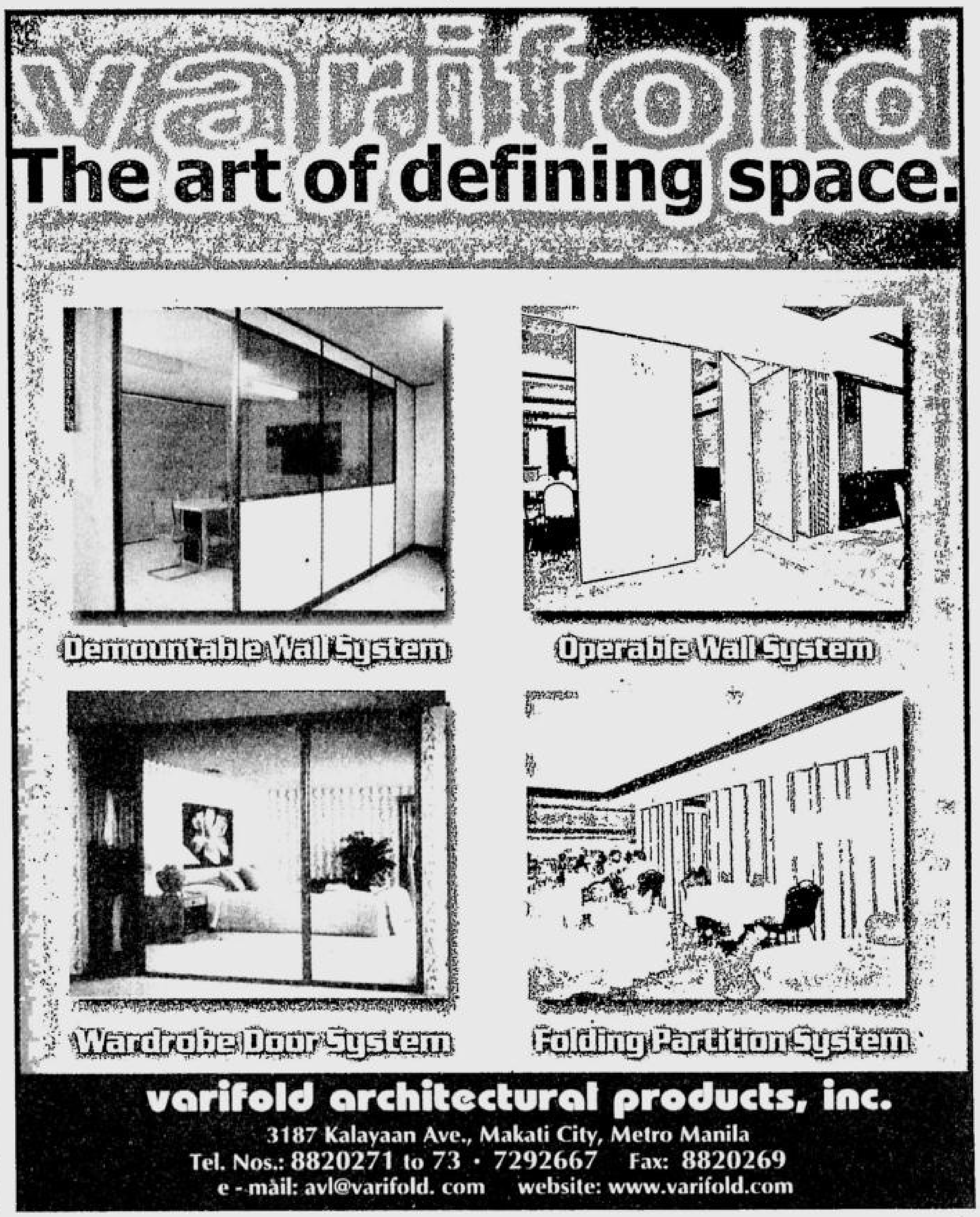
Yugoslavia, a well-educated and potentially rich country, has been impoverished by years of conflict and chaos aggravated by UN sanctions that have left millions of ordinary Serbs struggling to get by.

Born on Aug. 20, 1941 in eastern Serbia to a Montenegrin priest and a staunchly communist teacher, Milosevic lived through the suicides of both his parents—his father, at age 21, and his mother, a decade later—while rising through the ranks of the communist system then ruling Yugoslavia.

As the communist bloc collapsed in 1989, Milosevic eased from being the head of a communist-style collective presidency of Serbia to holding the Western-style presidency of the republic the following year.

As Serbian president, Milosevic oversaw the rapid disintegration of the Yugoslav federation, first with the independence of Croatia and Slovenia, and then Bosnia the following year.

Accused by the West of masterminding and arming the Serb militias which waged a bloody ethnic war in the independence-minded republics, Milosevic survived their loss—and Western sanctions—by firing up nationalist sentiments at home. *Reports from AP, AFP*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Miriam: 'No. 1 foe' of Makati elite

(From page A1)

"My name is Defensor and I will defend President Estrada and the Filipino people," she added, drawing applause from the crowd that was even louder than that received by former first lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito.

Ejercito is also aspiring for a seat in the Senate under the Puwersa ng Masa coalition.

Santiago promised to help bring back Estrada to the presidency, maintaining that the former President's ouster was not constitutional.

Describing herself as the defender of the law, she accused the rich of Makati of using their money and power to "illegally" boot Estrada out of Malacañang.

The senator was referring to the Makati businessmen and socialites who actively participated in "People Power II" on Edsa in January that led to the downfall of Estrada.

"If they have no respect for the law, if they could not be swayed by reason, then I challenge them to a fistfight," she said.

She particularly cited Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption president Dante Jimenez, Bettina Arapeta-Aboitiz and Rosanna Tuason-Fores, who were banished from the impeachment court that was then trying Estrada on charges of corruption and tobacco tax kickbacks.

Santiago said she sent out the three for allegedly misbehaving while she was delivering her speech. The three denied the allegation and charged the senator with arrogance.

'Mad cow, fat cow'

On the subject of nasty text messages about her supposedly being a victim of mad cow disease, Santiago said: "If I am suffering from mad cow disease, they (Makati elite) are infected with the 'fat cow' disease."

"At least if a person eats the meat of a mad cow, he will die. But if they (rich people) are fed to a cow, the cow will die," Santiago said.

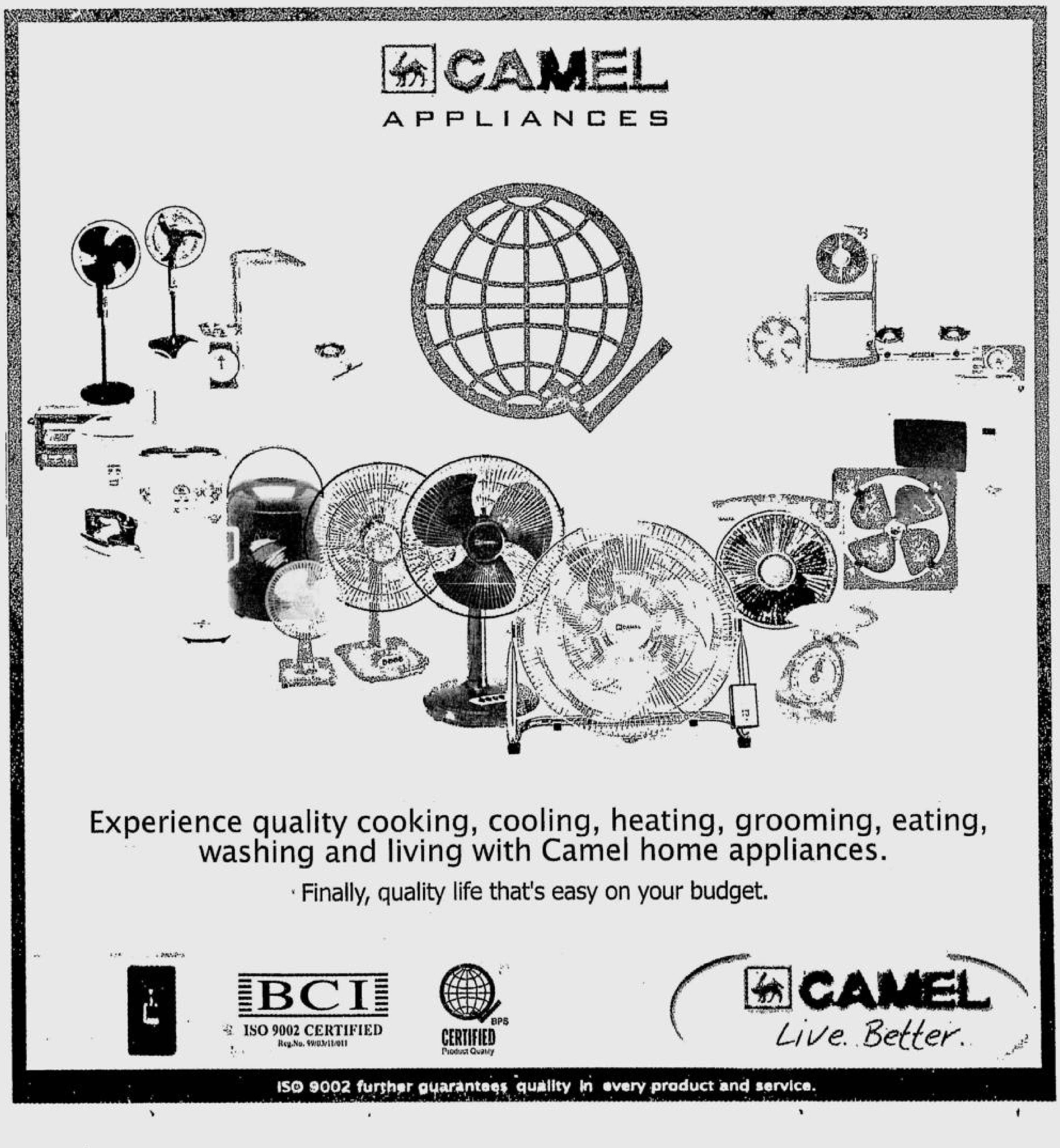
Santiago also lashed out at former President Fidel V. Ramos as "the brain of People Power II."

Comparing Ramos to a local fish, *talakitok*, Santiago said Ramos had no moral ascendancy because he had been linked to multimillion-peso scams during his administration, such as the construction of the centennial projects and the Public Estates Authority-Amari land deal.

The former President has denied the allegations.

Santiago, who is running for reelection, told the San Juan residents and supporters of the Puwersa ng Masa that she would fight for the Constitution, defend the poor and strive to have Estrada reinstated to power.

Agnes E. Donato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MILF no longer separatist–GMA

(From page A1)

"The way they talked to us in Kuala Lumpur, they are willing to talk to us in the context of our territorial integrity," a Malacañang statement quoted the President as having said Saturday in an interview with an Indian journalist, Saeed Naqvi.

Starting tomorrow, MILF fighters have been ordered to silence their guns, ahead of peace negotiations with the government.

"The suspension of military action will begin at 1 a.m. tomorrow and will probably (last) until we can conclude a peace accord with the Macapagal administration," MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said.

In a message aired over Cotabato City-based radio station dxMS, Kabalu quoted MILF chair Salamat Hashim as saying that "under the present government leadership, there appears to be a greater chance of forging a peace accord that will bring peace in Mindanao, hopefully."

Ms Macapagal last week announced that the MILF had agreed to the formal resumption of talks with the government following a secret meeting with a senior security adviser in Malaysia.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes gave assurance that the President was committed to keeping the country's territorial integrity.

AFP pullout

But he said the government might pull out 2,000 soldiers from former MILF camps in the interest of peace.

Ms Macapagal assured the public that in the accord that Eduardo Ermita, presidential adviser on the peace process, signed with the MILF, the government did not give up its hold on Camp Abubakar when it agreed to develop the area along with the MILF.

The military captured Abubakar, the main camp of the MILF, and other rebel bases last year after then President Joseph Estrada declared an all-out war against the MILF.

Ms Macapagal said military officials in the peace talks would not enter into any deal disadvantageous to the government.

"I am confident that whatever it is they do in the peace negotiations, they will not swing to the other side of the pendulum," she said over radio dzRH.

The President has come under fire for reportedly giving away Abubakar and two other camps when the government agreed to allow MILF members and their families to return to their homes.

Opposition

In Cebu City, opposition senatorial candidates lashed out at the administration for the secret talks with the MILF.

Former Sen. Santanina Rasul expressed fears that the accord could result in the government renouncing its claim over Sabah.

Senatorial candidate Ricardo "Dong" Puno suggested that the Senate investigate the accord.

For his part, reelectionist Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said the talks were meant to return Abubakar to the MILF.

"Probably they want to couch the agreement in such a manner using the term 'community' in the resurrection of the military camps with the total consent of the government," said Enrile, a defense secretary of the Marcos regime.

He said returning the camps to the rebels would have a telling effect on the soldiers, whose comrades sacrificed their lives for the recovery of the territory long held by the MILF.

Appeasing rebs

The Department of National Defense did not escape Enrile's criticism. He noted that the DND was trying to "appease" rebel forces and was "sacrificing" the Constitution in the process.

But Defense Secretary Reyes said the government was not returning Abubakar to the MILF. He said the government could now assert its territorial integrity because it had shown the MILF its might when it captured the supposedly impregnable camp.

"The government under (President Macapagal) is very firm about our territorial integrity. No one should challenge the sovereignty of our republic. So we are not returning any camp," he said.

He said that for the cause of peace, the government was addressing the root causes of the Moro insurgency.

Reyes said this was why the military was supportive of developing the camps together with the MILF.

"The reason for this is that we cannot all be at war forever," he said. "At the end of the day, there must be a political solution and socioeconomic reforms."

Reyes said the military was even willing to withdraw 2,000 soldiers from the camps.

"Our soldiers at Camp Abubakar cannot stay there indefinitely. If we develop the area to be home not only for the MILF but for everyone in Mindanao . . . then we can recall our soldiers there and they can go somewhere else," he said.

Best time to talk

Reyes said this was the best time for the government to negotiate with the MILF because it was doing so from a position of strength.

"Their (military) force has been greatly weakened. Now is the best time to talk to them," he said.

Asked whether the capture of MILF camps had instilled fear among the MILF fighters, Reyes replied, "Yes. They are now convinced that their acts of challenging government authority will not work. It is better to support the government than to fight it." *With a report from Martin P. Marfil*

Quezon solon tagged in shabu trafficking

(From page A1)

group that was supposed to receive the 365 kilos of *shabu* which residents of Sariaya, Quezon, accidentally intercepted in August last year.

The bulk of the shipment had been intended for another group. Alcala's drug ring was to get a share of the shipment.

After the police intercepted the shipment, Alcala blamed Perpiñan for the debacle. Since then, Perpiñan has been on the run.

Congressman's side

"This is election season. So although I'm not seeking reelection because my wife is the one running for office, it is expected of us to become fair targets of black propaganda from my political opponents," Punzalan, a last-termer congressman, said in denying the allegations.

Lucena Mayor Talaga also could not help letting out a big laugh when asked by the INQUIRER for comment. "Is this a joke?"

The mayor said the accusation was ironic because the city was recognized in Malacañang last week as the "Best Performer Local Government Against Illegal Drugs" in Southern Tagalog.

"Then here now is this malicious allegation from someone I don't even know," Talaga said.

"Who is the principal behind this demolition job against my person? Why would I risk myself to be seen in the company of notorious pusher like Athel? And in a public place at that?" he asked.

But Talaga admitted that he was indeed looking for Alcala and his group "to bust him."

Election issue

The mayor noted that his alleged involvement in the illegal drug trade had been a perennial election issue against him.

Talaga mentioned that Dondon Alcala, the vice mayoral candidate of his political opponent in the May 14 elections, was the nephew of Athel.

When the INQUIRER contacted him for his reaction, Alejandrino shouted "*P . . .niya.*"

Later, he recalled that sometime in July last year, a guy that fit the description of Perpiñan volunteered as a police asset in the anti-drug campaign.

When the INQUIRER described Perpiñan, Alejandrino was sure that the person was the same guy.

"He's a nut. He fed us wrong information several times," the police officer said.

Alejandrino expressed willingness to undergo a lie detector test if Perpiñan would take a psychiatric test.

Like Punzalan and Talaga, Alejandrino said politics had something to do with the information provided by Perpiñan.

"I have a brother running for vice mayor in Lucena. Naturally, I could be a target of a demolition job," he said.

DELFIN MALLARI

PERPIÑAN: Whistle-blower

Last week, Perpiñan sought the help of the Catholic Church in Quezon after Alcala's men kidnapped his sister Tuesday.

Father Enriquez, the Lucena diocese social action coordinator, brought Perpiñan to Manila on Wednesday and convinced him to disclose what he knew about the drug syndicate to the authorities.

Noli de Castro

Enriquez said they would ask the Department of Justice to summon broadcaster and senatorial candidate Noli de Castro and alleged drug lords Benito Tieng of Binondo and Raymund Tan to shed more light on Alcala's drug trade.

Controversial Hong Kong narcotics agent Mary Ong and former Lucena drug enforcement chief Eric Armamento will also be asked to talk about Alcala's activities.

Enriquez said De Castro should be summoned because the crew of his television program, "Magandang Gabi Bayan (MGB)," stayed in Sariaya for four days to investigate the August drug bust, the biggest take last year. But MGB did not air what it found out.

Enriquez said De Castro should explain why the segment was not shown. The priest noted that witnesses in the drug haul became fearful for their lives after the MGB crew went around looking for them to get interviews.

Perpiñan said Tieng was Alcala's regular supplier of shabu while Tan, Tieng's alleged associate, was arrested during the drug bust in August.

Perpiñan added that Ong also knew of the shipment and had confirmed Tieng's alleged illicit activities.

Armamento, Lucena's former drug enforcement chief, allegedly knew "a lot" about Alcala's group but was relieved of his post when he campaigned hard against drugs, he said.

Perpiñan said Alcala had "cornered" the drug trade in Quezon with the help of the high-ranking officials while aspiring drug dealers were dealt with "the full force of the law."

Talaga and Alcala allegedly coordinated the syndicate's ground operations, while Punzalan and Alejandrino took care of the officials "upstairs."

Perpiñan named Senior Insp. Enrico Villanueva, Lucena's Drug Enforcement Unit chief; investigators Nomer Pacia and a certain Diocos; Special Weapons and Tactics team member Jay Formaran; and a former policeman, Abel Aguilar, as the ones who did the drug ring's "dirty work."

Monthly payola

Perpiñan said he gave Villanueva P40,000 a month; Pacia and Aguilar, P15,000 each; and Diocos and Formaran, P20,000.

"We chose them because they were in strategic posts in the police organization. Whenever the group had a problem, they were in a position to help us," he said.

Perpiñan said he did not know how much Alcala gave Punzalan, Alejandrino and Talaga in exchange for their protection.

"I did not dare ask Athel about that because he is a very paranoid person," he said.

Pacia, Aguilar, Formaran and Diocos were involved in the killing of Alcala's own men who had caught the alleged drug lord's ire, according to Perpiñan.

He said he saw the execution of a certain Marlon Ruedas, an Arnold Dimaculangan, and an 18-year-old identified only as "Bunso."

Family driver

Perpiñan said he got to know Alcala after becoming the drug lord's family driver in 1998.

"I'd heard of stories that he was involved in drugs, but I thought these were only hearsay," he said.

But one day, somebody went to Alcala's house to buy shabu. Perpiñan said his boss ordered him to get a clutch bag containing the illegal substance from Alcala's room.

When the drug lord saw that he could be trusted, Alcala introduced him to the drug trade.

Perpiñan said Alcala's drug ring involved only 10 people, but it served as the tip of a huge drug distribution system for addicts in Quezon's small barrios and big towns like Sariaya, Lukban, Tayabas and Mauban, the Polillo Islands and Lucena.

At first, Alcala tried to get his supply from a certain Ferdie Tanlaico of Edang Street in Pasay City, according to Perpiñan. But a disagreement led Alcala to Tieng, who became his regular supplier.

Perpiñan said Mayor Talaga and his former boss became associates after Alcala called him up in 1999 to discuss how to improve the distribution of drugs.

"I know Mayor Talaga is involved because I myself heard him tell Athel how to improve the selling of drugs in Quezon," Perpiñan said.

"It's good that you control the drugs here and your profits are big. Maybe you could increase the money you give to my boys," Perpiñan quoted Talaga as telling Alcala.

Perpiñan said he was also present when Alcala met Alejandrino in 1999 at the Antigua Restaurant in Lucena. There, the provincial police chief allegedly told the drug lord, "*Dito sa loob ng* Quezon, *sagot ko na kayo* (I'll take care of you here in Quezon)."

During the last quarter of 1999, Perpiñan said he and Alcala met with Punzalan, Talaga and Alejandrino at the Aristocrat Restaurant on Roxas Boulevard in Manila.

At the restaurant, Alejandrino said the profits of Alcala should go up because he had complete control of the drug business in Quezon.

Punzalan said he expected more drugs to be unloaded in Quezon because it was getting difficult to unload drugs in Malabon and Cavite.

Popo of Camp Crame

Punzalan also visited Alcala's house, telling the drug lord not to worry about the Philippine National Police's anti-drugs campaign.

"The congressman said he would talk to Popo, a general in Camp Crame," Perpiñan said.

"The general's support was supposed to be OK. Athel then told him that he would bet that they could get the (support of) the highest-ranking general in Crame," Perpiñan said.

Perpiñan said his elder sister Victoriana was abducted on the night of March 26 in her house in Barangay Mayao Parada, near the boundary of Pagbilao, Quezon and this city.

"We had just arrived in the house. Then I went to the nearby store to buy cigarettes. Suddenly a red L-300 without plate number parked in front of the house and dragged my sister into the van. I ducked for cover as I watched the goings-on. That was why I was able to positively identify the two cops as members of the Lucena City police force," Perpiñan said.

Binondo syndicate

"I was the one in charge of the payoffs every month, that's why I knew them," he said.

He said he was the real subject of the abduction because of his intimate knowledge of the ins and outs of a big-time drug syndicate based in Binondo.

The syndicate has a vast network of pushers and protectors in Quezon because of its strategic location as a drop-off point of shabu smuggled into the country.

He mentioned several clubs in Lucena that also served as drug distribution centers, with their owners acting as pushers themselves.

In August last year, six Chinese unloaded 365 kg of shabu, estimated to be worth P730 million, from a speedboat in Barangay Bignay in Sariaya.

The traffickers were caught by a group of villagers with the help of at least five soldiers from the Southern Luzon Command based in Camp Guillermo Nakar.

Perpiñan said the seized drug belonged to the syndicate where he belonged.

He said the attempted smuggling in Bignay was the second. "The first attempt was successful."

Perpiñan disclosed that while the second shabu shipment was unloaded in Bignay, the same volume of the illegal drug was unloaded on the coasts of Unisan and Padre Burgos towns in the Bondoc Peninsula.

"But we were not connected with that shipment. Athel's syndicate was only concerned with the unloading in Bignay, which was eventually busted," he said.

Sino jets intercept US Navy aircraft

(From page A1)

intercepted by two People's Republic of China (PRC) fighter aircraft," the US Pacific Command in Hawaii said.

The Navy plane collided with one of the Chinese fighters. "The planes actually bumped into each other," said a Pacific Command spokesperson, Lt. Col Dewey Ford.

"There was contact between one of the Chinese aircraft and the EP-3, causing sufficient damage for the US plane to issue a 'Mayday' signal and divert to an airfield on Hainan," the command said in a statement. Hainan is an island province off China's southern coast near Vietnam.

The collision appeared to be "an accident" and the Chinese did not force the plane down, said Col. John Bratton, another spokesperson for the command.

None of the 24 crewmen were injured in the incident, which occurred in international air space, according to the command.

This is the first time a US military plane has made an emergency landing after running into a Chinese aircraft, Bratton said.

US President George W. Bush was set Sunday to decide whether to sell hi-tech arms to Taiwan despite Beijing's vehement opposition, in the first momentous foreign policy decision of his presidency. According to Commander Rex Totty, full details of damage to the aircraft were not immediately available.

"At this point we really don't know the full extent of the damage," he told AFP. "We know that the number one engine and the underside of the EP-3 were damaged.

Military spokesmen said they didn't know where in Hainan Island the plane was. The Chinese Foreign Ministry had no immediate comment. An official at the Defense Ministry hung up when a reporter in Beijing called.

The US plane took off from Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, the US military said.

Washington has sent a message expressing its concern about the incident to the government of China, both via its embassy in Beijing and the Chinese Embassy in Washington, the Pacific Command said.

The United States has asked that the crew be well treated and that the aircraft be repaired and allowed to leave.

"We see no problems with retrieving the crew," Bratton said.

Sunday's incident came almost a year after two Chinese F-8 fighters came close to a US spy plane as it carried out a reconnaissance mission off the Chinese mainland. *AFP, AP*

High-intensity political action over 'lewd' film

(From page A1)

For example, the protest coalition embraces the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, the self-appointed guardian of responsible journalism, and Armida P. Siguion-Reyna, former chief censor of the Estrada administration, who supported the advertising boycott against the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Here, one sees right away a contention over the definition of freedom and responsibility.

Siguion-Reyna is vociferous in denouncing the Macapagal administration for suppressing the "freedom of artistic expression." We are not sure what she means by "artistic expression." Is the film, "Live Show," showing people copulating, an example, if not a model, of artistic expression?

Film director Marilou Diaz-Abaya, who has criticized the film industry for producing films with less inspiring quality (that is, for the uplift of the human spirit), may not agree with her.

Sounds like Erap

The CMFR, which acts like a *de facto* supreme court for the media, setting norms for journalistic responsibility, is sounding like Joseph Estrada and Rene Saguisag as passionate defenders of the Constitution. It says that first, the ban on the film violates the protection of free expression guaranteed by the Constitution, and, secondly, the intervention of Cardinal Sin, resulting in the censorship of the film, violates the constitutional principle of separation of Church and State.

While Siguion-Reyna is certainly not the best authority to pontificate on what freedom of expression is like, the CMFR, together with its noisy cohorts, walks on tricky ground. The doctrine of separation of Church and State in this country has been treading on blurred ground. This separation, while theoretically desirable, has always been clouded by political and social contentions.

When Cardinal Sin issued a pastoral letter calling on Estrada to resign because he had lost the "moral authority" and ascendancy to govern, did the CMFR protest? Did the Left protest? Did the artists protest? Of course, Estrada and his gang denounced the intervention as a violation of the separation of Church and State.

Consistency

Let's be consistent; if we can't, let's not mangle the Constitution. In the history of the blurred relationship between Church and State in this country, a violation is defined by which side you are with. Interference is legitimized or condemned by the outcome of the conflict.

On questions of morality, who are the most authoritative arbiters? Morality is the business of the Church. That is why it does not hesitate to make proclamations on morality, including political morality, or denounce looting in public office.

Ms Macapagal says it was not Sin who put pressure on her to ask Nicanor Tiongson to resign from the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board. She said Tiongson was the cardinal's man. Sin recommended him to the board. So, she asked Msgr. Socrates Villegas what should be done with Tiongson.

The Church was one of the principal allies of Ms Macapagal in People Power II. Probably, Sin's opinion influenced her in banning the film. But probably also, it reinforced her own preferences on questions of morality. That's coincidence.

There's no single explanation for a decision. Only bigots and fanatics believe in mono explanation.

Coalition

What we may not overlook is that the President is building a coalition to consolidate her administration, and her Cabinet is a reflection of the coalition composed of groups and institutions that helped her depose Estrada.

Clearly, the Church cannot be dismissed as a key influence in her administration or even in the country's political affairs. It has always been that way. The Church cannot be ignored any more than the military can be ignored.

This explains, in part, why Gen. Angelo Reyes was appointed defense secretary after bringing the Armed Forces to defect from Estrada. But there's something more to Reyes' defection that makes him a pivotal element in the post-Estrada dispensation. That element is the civilian-oriented philosophy of Reyes in transferring the military's allegiance to Ms Macapagal. That's what makes the President comfortable with him. If it had been otherwise, he could have given way to demands inside the AFP to take power themselves.

People power use

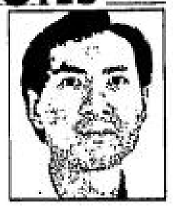
What causes uneasiness is the penchant of society groups to pick up and magnify constitutional issues. After People Power II, we are still in a state of high political mobilization. In that state, civil society groups are trigger-happy to go back to the streets and use "people power" against the withdrawal of a "pornographic" film, against the delay by the Supreme Court to rule on a motion for reconsideration of its 13-0 decision upholding the legitimacy of the Macapagal administration, and against Cabinet secretaries introducing reforms in their departments (like Richard Gordon and Raul Roco).

The most urgent and important priority of a new government is to establish political stability, turn the country toward economic recovery, and make it work honestly and transparently. The emphasis should be on hard work and on delivering results. This objective is being set back by the propensity to create debate and nit-pick over constitutional issues, like the suppression of the right to artistic expression or the separation of Church and State.

This reflects the accent in Philippine society on rights over responsibility—and producing results. It does not damage the Constitution to reduce the overheating fueled by the emotional debate over lewd films. Overheating can break down a political system. The heated exercise over pornography can shift to work, rather than produce saliva, which, today, is our foremost contribution to the gross domestic product.

Wang's time

NBA NOTES



Henry Liao

HISTORY beckons when Chinese star Wang Zhizhi takes to the floor this week in an official NBA game with the Dallas Mavericks.

The 7-1 Wang, whose play resembles that of former Indiana Pacers center Rik Smits, inked a two-year deal with the Mavs, securing the NBA minimum for a rookie second-round draft choice.

Dallas' No. 2 pick in 1999, he will be earning $316,969, on a prorated basis, for the remainder of the regular season (possibly eight games. A spot on the Mavs' 12-man playoff roster will depend on his performance in the next two weeks.

Once Wang makes his NBA debut, he will become the first legitimate Asian player to see action in an official league contest. In the early sixties, little-known Tom Meschery, who was born in Manchuria, China, played alongside the legendary Wilt Chamberlain with the San Francisco (now Golden State) Warriors. However, he is believed to be of American descent and was born in China by force of circumstances.

This past season, Wang powered the Bayi (August One People's Liberation Army) Rockets to their sixth consecutive title in the Chinese National Basketball League. No other team has secured a championship since the pro league opened shop in 1995-96.

Wang's rockets whipped the Shanghai Sharks, powered by potential 2001 NBA draftee Yao Ming, 3-1, in the best-of-five CNBL finals after dropping the series opener in Shanghai.

Wang averaged 27.5 points and 11.0 rebounds per game in the final series. In the decisive fourth game in Shanghai, he scored 40 points and grabbed 11 boards to steer the Rockets to a 128-118 victory.

Bayi and Shanghai finished the regular season with identical 18-4 records and split their four-game head-to-head meetings.

In 1999-2000, Wang became the first and only player in CNBL history to be named the MVP during the regular season, All-Star Game and championship series in the same campaign.

Wang, who turns 24 in July, reportedly earned $65,000 while playing for the army-run Rockets. Player salaries in the Chinese League average $12,500 annually.

An officer in the Chinese military, Wang is the son of two Beijing teachers. His 6-5 father and 6-1 mother were former basketball players themselves.

Zhizhi was first sighted at age 16 on the Chinese national squad. Since then, he has led his country to the gold medal in the 1995 and 1999 Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC) championships and the 1998 Asian Games.

China landed a respectable eighth in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics as Wang compiled averages of 11.1 points and 5.6 rebounds an outing. During the 2000 Sydney Olympics, the Chinese dropped to 10th out of 12 entries, winning just twice (vs. New Zealand and Italy) in six games, and Wang normed 13.5 ppg, 5.0 rpg and 1.3 blocked shots every time out.

Once coveted by US Schools such as Georgetown, Louisiana State, Marquette and Maryland, Wang has been playing ball professionally in 1994. He has a tremendous upside but, at 220 pounds, lacks the strength to hang with the NBA superstars. Wang also barely speaks English.

Record field joins triathlon

A NEW record field was registered yesterday as a big batch of up and coming triathletes from all over the country challenged the veterans during the 1st leg of the 2001 National Age-Group Triathlon series in Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City yesterday.

The 148-strong field eclipsed the previous record of 137 participants set during the Age-Group Sprint Triathlon last October.

UP varsity swimmer Natalia Uy and Francis Mercado of Ayala Alabang ruled the 15-19 age brackets, while Markki Stroem and Roxy Barrios triumphed in the 14-and-below boys-girls categories.

The event, organized by the Triathlon Association of the Philippines (TRAP) with the Ayala Alabang Village Association (AAVA) and sponsored by Speedo, Ground Zero, Hotel La Corona, Viva Mineral Water, PSC and the POC Sport for All Commission, is aimed to widen the participation base of triathlon/duathlon/aquathlon events.

Abet Biagan and Amale Mendezona led the Cebuano medal assault by ruling the 25-29 age group with the former submitting the best time of 1:18:17 to earn 100 points for the series.

On the distaff side, Cathy Grebert had the best time of 1:33:02, getting her 100 points and the Female 30-34 title. Other winners were Michael Mariano and Mieka Martinez (2024), Juan Apolinario Reyes Jr. (30-34), Macro Gonzales (35-39), Alvin Alindogan (4044), Fred Angeles (45-49), Rodolfo Dizon (50-54), Tirso De Luna (55-above), Francis Mercado and Alison Hyde (Residents).

Mandaluyong derby slated

POPULAR pit stars from the United States try to conquer the local cockfighting scene anew as Mandaluyong Coliseum presents this year's second leg of the "Mandaluyong International 9-Cock Derby" on May 29, 31 and June 2.

Anchoring the Americans is veteran cocker-breeder Chuck Berry of Oklahoma, whose Ariba Albay entry ruled the first leg (International 9-Cock Derby) held last January after posting 7.5 points.

Host of the super cockfest are businessman-sportsman Vic Yu and engineer Sonny Lagon of San Pablo City.

"We are expecting more than 75 powerhouse bets to enlist in this event," Yu and Lagon said.

Meanwhile, Mandaluyong Coliseum is also preparing for the P5 million "Kalayaan 7-Cock Derby" On June 12, 14, 16, 19, 21, 23 and 26. Entry fee is lowered to only P22,000 to accommodate medium scale cockers to participate and have a chance of hitting the jackpot with a minimal investment required.

Both derbies (International 9-cock Derby and Kalayaan 7-Cock Derby) will adopt the "open derby" format. For inquiries, please contact 747-4797, 534-4110, 531-4003 and 531-4005.

NCAA FINAL

It's Duke vs Arizona

MINNEAPOLIS—It will be Arizona's lightning quick Wildcats against the resilient Duke Blue Devils in Monday night's NCAA championship game.

Arizona used a big second half and a fierce zone defense to shut down defending national champion Michigan State 80-61 in the first semifinal Saturday night. Duke overcame a 22-point first-half deficit and advanced with a 95-84 victory over Maryland in a battle of Atlantic Coast Conference rivals.

The championship game matches coaches Lute Olson of Arizona and Mike Krzyzewski of Duke, both finalists this year for the basketball Hall of Fame. Both have taken their schools to this championship before, Olson in 1997 and Krzyzewski in 1991 and 1992, the last repeat champions.

After beating Illinois and Michigan State, Arizona will be after its third No. 1 seed against Duke. The only other time a team has beaten three top-seeded schools was Arizona in 1997. Duke is looking for its third victory over a Pacific-10 team after knocking off Ucla and Southern California to reach Minneapolis.

Jason Gardner ignited the Arizona offense and Michael Wright finally came alive to lift the Wildcats to an 80-61 victory over defending champion Michigan State in the NCAA tournament's semifinals.

"We came out right after the half and got a number of stops in a row," coach Lute Olson said. "Offensively, we hit some open shots, but the game was won on the defensive end."

Despite the loss of Mateen Cleaves and two more seniors from last year's title team, the Spartans became just the ninth team to make three straight Final Fours. But against the preseason No. 1—the team center Loren Woods said might be the best ever—Michigan State was outmanned.

Thus continued a heartwrenching journey for the Wildcats, still mourning the loss of Olson's wife, Bobbi, who died of cancer Jan. 1.

The team has had other difficulties, too: Woods and Richard Jefferson were suspended early in the season for violating NCAA rules. Coaches sent senior Eugene Edgerson home for a few days in January after he complained too loudly about the role he was playing.

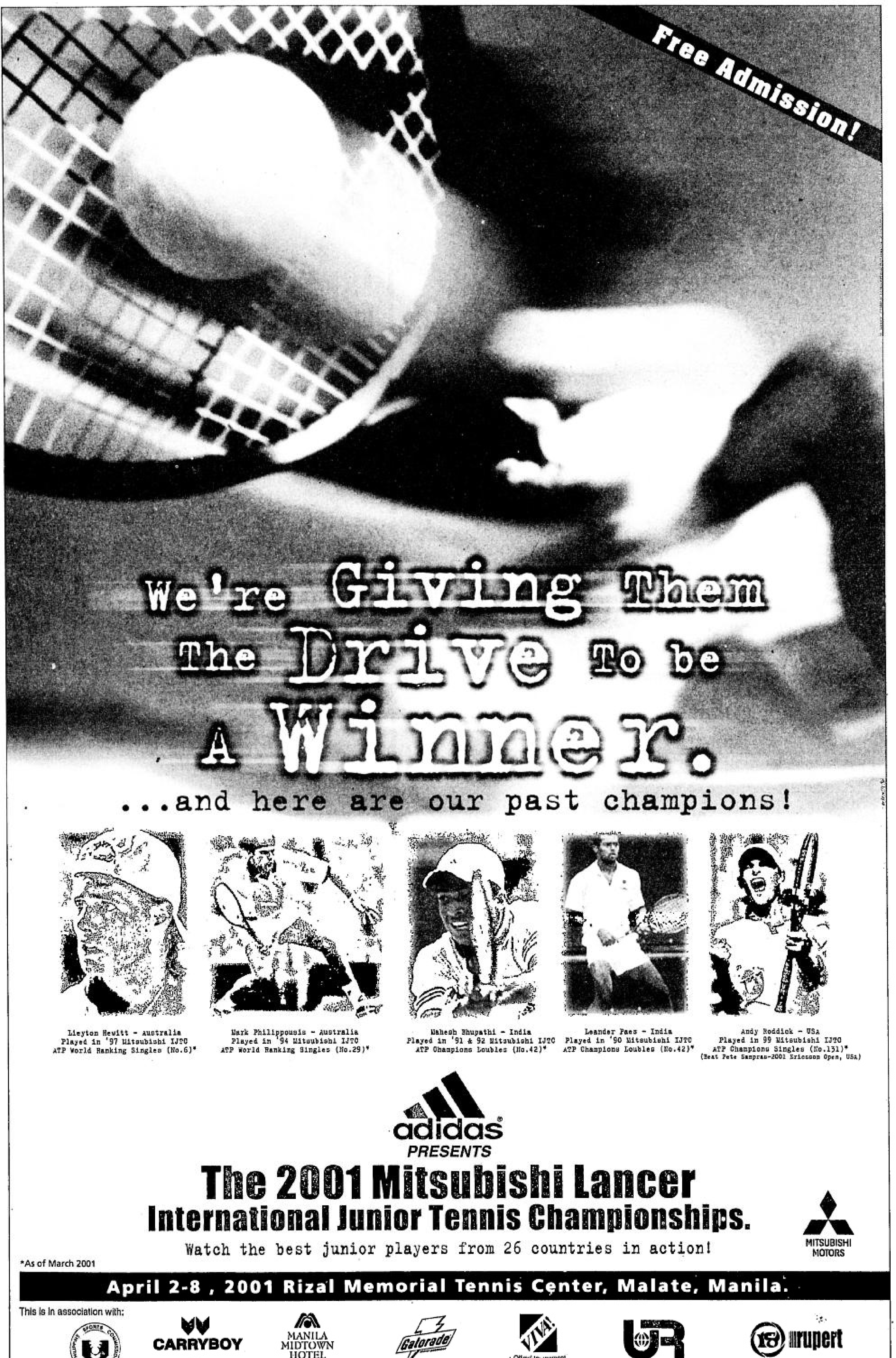
But nobody seemed upset with their role in this game, especially Gardner, a 5-foot-10 (175-centimeter) guard who played at the Indianapolis high school where Arizona practiced for the Final Four in 1997.

All Gardner wanted was a glimpse of practice, but security guards kept shooing him away. Four years later, he was at the center of Arizona's dominating performance, scoring 21 points on 6-for-11 shooting.

NBA Results

Houston 96, Washington 86; Atlanta 99, Denver 88; Miami 97, Chicago 90; Milwaukee 86, San Antonio 77; LA Clippers 104, Cleveland 97. AP

JEFFERSON slam dunks in the second half. He was called for a technical foul after he hung on the rim. AP



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ATP Champions Loubles (No.42)*

Leander Paes - India
Played in '90 Mitsubishi IJTC
ATP Champions Loubles (No.42)*

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Valenzuela hosts chess clinics

MILO Checkmate goes to Valenzuela City tomorrow, April 3, to start its simultaneous summer clinics in Metro Manila and provinces.

The clinic in Valenzuela will be held daily at St. Jude Academy in Malinta for five days from 9 a.m.-4p.m. Enrollment is accepted until April 3 from 9 a.m.-1p.m. at the principal's office or call 826-8560.

Other schedules and venues are: Parañaque and Las Piñas at Golden Gems Learning School, Sucat—April 9-15; Diliman, Q.City at Civil Service Commission—April 9-15; Muntinlupa City at Nestle Phils. Alabang Plant—April 16-25; Meycauayan—Apr. 18-22;

Malolos-Apr. 30-May 5; Angeles City-May 3-7; Dinalupihan, Bataan—May 4-8; Lipa City at Fiesta Mall-May 9-13; Batangas City—May 4-18.

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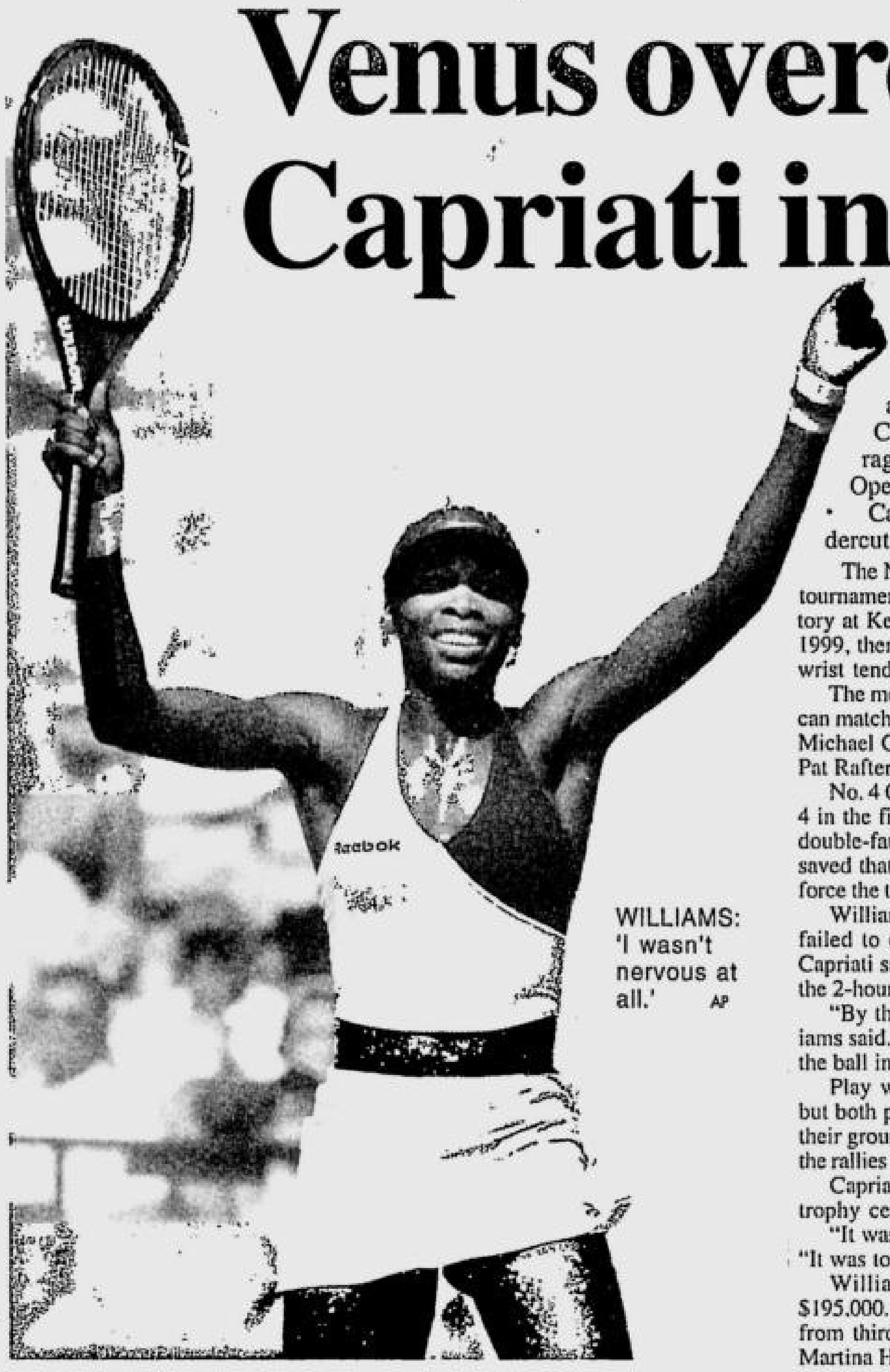
Venus overcomes Capriati in final



WILLIAMS: 'I wasn't nervous at all.' AP

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida—Venus Williams overcame eight match points and 71 unforced errors to edge Jennifer Capriati 4-6, 6-1, 7-6 (4) Saturday in a ragged but thrilling final at the Ericsson Open.

Capriati led most of the match but was undercut by 16 double faults.

The No. 3-seeded Williams became a three-time tournament champion with her 18th consecutive victory at Key Biscayne. She won the title in 1998 and 1999, then missed last year's tournament because of wrist tendinitis.

The men's final Sunday will also be an all-American matchup: No. 3 Andre Agassi against No. 19 Jan-Michael Gambill. Agassi advanced by beating No. 8 Pat Rafter of Australia 6-0, 6-7 (2), 6-2.

No. 4 Capriati had three match points serving at 5-4 in the final set, then five more serving at 6-5. She double-faulted on her final match point, and Williams saved that 26-point game to make the score 6-6 and force the tiebreaker.

Williams took a 6-1 lead in the tiebreaker, then failed to convert three match points herself before Capriati smacked a forehand into the net to close out the 2-hour, 24-minute match.

"By that time I was really into the match," Williams said. "I wasn't nervous at all. I was able to keep the ball in play, and I got some lucky points."

Play was especially sloppy in the first two sets, but both players began moving the better and hitting their groundstrokes more firmly in the final set, when the rallies became longer.

Capriati was still able to muster a smile during the trophy ceremony.

"It was a super close match," she told the crowd. "It was too bad somebody had to lose."

Williams earned $375,000, and Capriati won $195,000. In next week's rankings, Williams will climb from third to second for the first time, behind only Martina Hingis of Switzerland.

Williams won the title despite 122 unforced errors in her final two matches. She made 51 while beating Hingis on Thursday.

The only other meeting between the two finalists came at the Key Biscayne tournament in 1997, when the 16-year-old Williams won in three sets.

"She's definitely like beatable," Capriati said. "It's not like I wasn't close." *AP*

Iggy, Abe pull away from Elena tilt foes

CLAVECILLA

IGGY Clavecilla and Abe Rosal all but decided the issue in the gross competition after another solid team-up even as Cookie LaO fired a tournament low four-under-par 68 on the third day of the fifth Sta. Elena Cup in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Clavecilla, shooting a couple of 38 Stableford points equivalent to two-under 70s, and Rosal, submitting 37-36 or a medal 73-72, were virtually unassailable with their 149 aggregate.

LaO burned the course with his 40 points but it was not enough to put his tandem with Senen Matoto close enough to the leading pair of Pablo de Borja-Philip Judan (168) in Class B as they were at 148.

Ma. Lucia Carlos and Sandy Squillantini zeroed in on the Class C crown as they remained 10 points clear of the next team in the standings, Ahbee Tayao-Steve Naguiat, going into the final day.

Nokia Mobile Phones staged a grand awards ceremony for the 180 member-guest teams last night in cooperation with the rest of the sponsors.

These are the Rustan's Group of Companies, Audi, Toyota, Jomon Carpet, Diamond Motors, Volvo, Flying V, Shell, Ford Edsa, Kart Plaza, GG&A, Mayer Steel, Marsman Drysdale, PX Depot, Paramount Vinyl, Las Vegas Golf, Blue Cross, Mirant Philippines.

The hole-in-one package included an Audi A4, Echo and Camry from Toyota, a Yamaha cart, a Mitsubishi car and Maxfli Revolution golf set. Steve Chan had already won the Maxfli set and Yamha cart after scoring an ace.

In the competition, Clavecilla and Rosal were still a point up on Rody Antonino and Manuel Tinio with their 153. Enrico Cavestany and Ariel Abunal were running third at 151.

De Borja and Judan stayed seven points ahead of Romy and Jimmy Dy. Cora Suntay and Amylou Juinio totalled 153 to stay temporarily in third sport.

Age-group tourney

CEBU—The Visayas eliminations of the National age-group championship blasts off today at the Cebu Country Club with 60 jungolfers from the City and neighboring provinces seeing action.

Jungolf meet gets going

SIXTEEN squads, including six provincial squads, see action in the annual Jungolf Interclub tournament starting today at the post Manila Golf Club course inside Forbes Park.

Sherwood Hills, the defending champion, will be fielding the same team that won it last year in the tourney serving as the second leg of the summer circuit of the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines.

Gene Bondoc, runaway winner of Class A in last week's circuit opener at Tagaytay Highlands, will be spearheading the Sherwood squad that also includes Jacy Chua, Kim Chang Hoi and Martin Mediana.

The event sponsored by Northwest Airlines will be preceded by the hitting of ceremonial balls by NGAP president Rod Feliciano, Jungolf chair Amalia Montecillo, Jungolf president Merwin Mediana and MGC manager Joe Crespo at 7 a.m.

NSAs should invoke their autonomy

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THE NATIONAL Sports Associations are autonomous bodies under the charter of the International Olympic Committee.

To illustrate, in 1982 when IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch came to the Philippines to investigate government intervention in sports after then President Ferdinand Marcos abolished the Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation and replaced it with the Department of Youth and Sports Development, he asked Marcos to respect the autonomy of the Philippine Olympic Committee and the National Sports Associations.

But at present, it seems the POC is not keen on following this timeless rule. How come the POC ordered the holding of another election for the presidency of the Basketball Association of the Philippines, in violation of the autonomy of the BAP? Did the POC simply chose to ignore or conveniently forget the IOC charter which explicitly defines that "NSAs must be autonomous and shall have exclusive control over the promotion and development of their sports?"

To make matters worse, the POC also dipped its fingers in the formation of national teams not only in basketball but in the other sports as well. This is another violation. Also, the Arbitration Committee created by the POC is construed by many as one big joke because it composed of NSA officials who are widely known as supporters of POC president Celso Dayrit. This, in turn, could lead to a "scratch-my-back-and-I'll-scratch-yours" scenario.

On the other hand, the creation of the position of chairman of a National Sports Association does not conform to the model composition of an NSA. The position was only created to accommodate outgoing presidents like in track and field and basketball who wish to perpetuate themselves in office. This is the cause of the controversies in some associations.

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EFREN "Bata" REYES
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REYES (right) receives a replica of the $15,000 check from Ricky Del Rosario of Viva Vintage. Looking on is Aristeo "Putch" Puyat, head of the organizing Puyat Sports. ROGER MARGALLO

Bata humbles American rival

By June Navarro

EFREN "Bata" Reyes, cheered by a huge hometown crowd, repeated over American Earl "The Pearl" Strickland, 33-24, to win the San Miguel Beer $20,000 The Color of Money II Saturday night at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque City.

Reyes duplicated his 120-117 victory over the five-time US Open champion during their race-to-120 Color of Money in Hong Kong in 1996.

Though the encounter was shortened to a race-to-33 duel, Reyes controlled the two-day series from start to finish that earned him $15,000 from the $20,000 cash kitty.

"I still can't get my rhythm going," said the 47-year-old Reyes in Tagalog. "Yet he (Strickland) had an awful time getting the right shots."

Reyes bared he had not touched a cue stick since March 13, making him grope for form during their three race-to-11 matches, an understatement considering the agonizing moments Strickland had gone through.

"Efren has always been a better player than me," said Strickland. "But to tell you the truth, the loser's break format did me in. I hate it."

It was evident Saturday night as Strickland completely lost focus due to the sudden shift of momentum after each won rack.

Strickland, who pocketed $5,000, will have another shot at getting back at Reyes when both cue masters tangle again in the Color of Money III in September, this time in Canada.

Marked by a plethora of cleanups, Reyes broke free from a tight contest after finishing the 11th rack with a combination for a 6-5 count. Next, Strickland faltered on both breaks, allowing Reyes to clear the table in the 12th and 13th racks.

With an 8-5 advantage, Reyes already smelled the scent of victory as the crowd cheered lustily at the sidelines.

Strickland closed the gap, 8-10, but Reyes couldn't be denied of a victory as the American flubbed an easy corner shot that paved the way for a Reyes clear-up.

CARMONA KARTING

Mark Bumgarner (132) and Tyson Sy (86) show the way in this bit of action in the cadet 85cc race in the second leg of the 2001 Shell Super Karting Championships at the Carmona Racing Circuit in Cavite recently. Bumgarner topped the event sponsored by Coca-Cola, Bridgestone, Nokia, Match Box/Hot Wheels, Eastway Racing and Demvel's Enterprises.

'Schu' grabs pole

SAO PAULO, Brazil—The red Ferrari of Michael Schumacher grabbed the pole position in Saturday's qualifying session for Sunday's Brazilian Grand Prix, less than half a second ahead of brother Ralf of the Williams team.

Formula One's defending champion clinched the No. 1 spot on the grid with a best lap of 1 minute, 13.780 seconds around the 4.309-kilometer (2.671-mile) Interlagos circuit. It was his seventh consecutive pole position.

Ralf Schumacher took second place with a best time of 1:14.090.

Former champion Mika Hakkinen of the McLaren team will start third on the grid after a lap of 1:14.122, while Williams' Juan Pablo Montoya took fourth with 1:14.165.

McLaren's David Coulthard finished fifth in 1:14.178, followed by Ferrari's Rubens Barrichello, who clocked in at 1:14.191.

The Brazilian Grand Prix is the third race of the season, following the Australian and Malaysian Grand Prix's. *AP*

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SEABA STARTS TODAY

RP 5 faces Singapore

GAMES TODAY: (Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
12:45 p.m.—Opening ceremonies
1:30 p.m.—Thailand vs Brunei (Group B)
3:30 p.m.—RP vs Singapore (Group A)
5:30 p.m.—Malaysia vs Vietnam (Group A)

By Roy Luarca

IT'S time for the Philippine men's team to shine.

The Filipinos begin their defense of the South East Asia Basketball Association crown when they tangle with the Singaporeans at 3:30 p.m. today in Group A competition at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Composed of standouts from the Metropolitan Basketball Association, the Nationals are favored over the smaller Singaporeans whom RP Team coach Boyzie Zamar tagged as one of the squads to watch out for in the seven-team field divided into two groups.

Also cited by Zamar were Indonesia, the 1997 Seaba champion in Surabaya, and Malaysia, the 1995 Kuala Lumpur inaugural winner, and Thailand, which has virtually the same lineup that gave the Centennial Team a tough time in the 1998 Bangkok Asiad.

"We shouldn't be complacent against these teams. They've improved a lot, especially the Thais," said Zamar.

Thailand is slated to meet lowly Brunei in the 1:30 p.m. Group B opener, while Malaysia clashes with Vietnam in the other Group A tussle at 5:30 p.m.

Team skipper Romel Adducul, Chris Calaguio, Stephen Padilla, Chito Victolero and John Ferriols are expected to lead the Filipinos against the Singaporeans, who have reportedly been beefed up by two Chinese naturalized players.

Adducul and his teammates are bent on sweeping the tournament to prove that they deserve to represent the country in the coming Southeast Asian Games as well.

Executive Secretary Renato de Villa has been invited to be the guest of honor in the opening ceremonies starting at 12:30 p.m. Also expected to attend are Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Tuason, Philippine Olympic Committee president Cito Dayrit and chair Robert Aventajado, BAP president Tiny Literal, Seaba project director Gov. Chavit Singson, Seaba organizing committee co-chair Philip Juico and Fernando Carrascoso, RP team manager Alvin Tai Lian and BAP secretary general Graham Lim.

The tournament being supported by the PSC, POC, Bestank, Molten, Rain Forest Mineral Water, Absolute Distilled Water, YKL Color, Baker's Fair and Orchid Garden Suites will run up to Saturday.

Samsung Batteries have donated the glass trophies to be awarded to the top 3 finishers of the cagefest to be covered live by ABS-CBN using PTV 4 as broadcast vehicle.

MEMBERS of the RP team and head coach Dave Zamar welcome Alvin Tai Lian (standing, seventh from left) as its team manager for the 4th Seaba Men's Basketball Championships which the Basketball Association of the Philippines is hosting from April 2 to 7. Also shown is BAP Secretary General Graham Lim (standing, fourth from left).

Johnny A lifts Pop . . .

(From page A24)

was enough to keep the Panthers' together amid the Aces' comeback try.

The 30-year-old Abarrientos made two free throws in the final 8.5 seconds as Pop Cola took the game away for their seventh victory in 12 games, one win shy of the Top Four.

"He (Cone) hugged me after the game," Abarrientos said. "I just hugged him back because we are civil to each other."

Abarrientos and Juinio combined for 23 points as their vengeful performance overshadowed that of Rudy Hatfield, who topscored with 24 points and top-rebounded with 23 boards.

Hatfield's season-best game enabled the Panthers to fashion out the game-defining hustle that yielded 29 second-chance points as against Alaska's eight.

"I think getting even with Alaska has been the bigger motivating factor for us," said Pop coach Chot Reyes, whose charges not inflicted Alaska's seventh against six wins, but also scored the franchise's first win against Alaska in two games.

Mobiline routed league-leader Shell Velocity, 77-54, in the second game to boost its bid for a quarterfinal stint. The Phone Pals snapped a two-game losing streak for a 6-7 record, while the Turbo chargers lost for the first time in five games for a 9-4 card.

Scores:

POP COLA 93—Hatfield 24, Asaytono 22, Juinio 13, Antonio 11, Abarrientos 10, Ballesteros 8, Jarencio 3, Morano 2, Jose 0, Bolado 0.

ALASKA 90—Duremdes 25, Peek 22, Santos 15, Arigo 10, Gahol 8, Allado 4, Wallkvist 4, Ordonio 2, reyes 0, Ticzon 0.

Quarters: 16-19, 36-33, 57-50, 93-90.

Baguio 10-K run unfolds April 8

OVER 25 running clubs from Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon are seeing action in the first leg of the Adidas Pharmaton 10K running circuit which fires off on April 8 at the Burnham Park in Baguio City.

Heading the list are Runnex, RFM, Sunrisers, PCRC, Sarimanok, PSC, PNB, Greenhills, SMC, Manila Peninsula, Holy Angels University of Pampanga, Araw Running Club of Ayala Alabang, Malolos, Marikina, Adelfa Runners, Parada RC, Garden Runners, Squibb, Wyeth, PMA, Meralco, Antipolo and the Pines City Runners of Baguio City.

Race director Raffy Uytiepo said that Baguio City National High School, through its principal Emma Donaal, has agreed to provide lodging at the school for a minimal rate of P60 per person for out-of-town runners.

Attractive cash prizes, shoes, trophies, medals, singlets, certificates, squeeze bottles and RFM food products will be up for grabs in the race also co-sponsored by Gatorade Thirst Quencher, Mountain King, Vacation Hotel and backed by Red Cross Baguio Chapter, Baguio City Emergency Coordinating Group, RFM, Baguio City National High School, Jessee 102.3 Rhythms and the City of Baguio.

Registration is still ongoing at Casa Illonga Robinson's Place Ermita until today. Manila runners will then register at the Baguio Information Center, People's Park and at Athletes' Haven at No. 8 Laubach Road, Baguio City.

Japan spikers triumph

JAPAN retained the Nestea Beach Volleyball Asian Women's Championship crown after a 21-15, 21-14 win over China yesterday at the windy CCP complex grounds.

Top-seeded spikers Ryoko Tokuno and Chiaki Kusuhara encountered little resistance from crowd-favorite You Wenhui and Pan Wangye to take home a finely crafted fiber glass trophy and pocket $3,000.

Tokuno and Kusuhara filled the shoes of Teruko Nakano and Kaori Tuschiya, who won the title against Australia in the tournament's initial staging last year.

Before plunging into the final, Tokuno and Kusuhara tripped 1998 Bangkok Asian Games gold medalists Manatsanan Pangka and Rattanaporn Arlaisuk, 22-24, 21-19, 15-12.

China's Han Bo and Sun Jing copped second runner-up honors after toppling Pangka and Arlaisuk, 32-30, 23-21, in their fierce battle for third.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

Al S. Mendoza, Editor ▣ **Edwin M. Villanueva**, Assistant Editor

Sports Forum guests

NEWLY-appointed PSC commissioner Cynthia Carreon makes her first appearance in the weekly PSA Forum tomorrow at the Holiday Inn hotel. PBA commissioner Jun Bernardino shares the limelight with Carreon in the public service program sponsored by McDonald's, Agfa Colors and Red Bull. Barely a month into office after taking the post vacated by Leonardo Celles, Carreon is expected to talk about her plans in the government sports agency.

Johnny A lifts Pop past Alaska

GAMES WEDNESDAY
(Philsports)
5:15 p.m. – SLR vs Red Bull
7:30 p.m. – SMB vs Tanduay

By Marc Anthony Reyes

JOHNNY Abarrientos doesn't hide his feelings against former team Alaska Milk.

Last night, he found a fitting occasion to pour it all out, triggering Pop Cola's endgame hustle as the Panthers beat the Aces, 93-90, in the PBA All-Filipino Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

"It was a big deal for us, winning against coach Tim (Cone)," said Abarrientos, who along with Poch Juinio got traded unceremoniously during the pre-season.

Well, Abarrientos didn't exactly turn in his best game, statistical-wise but his presence at crunchtime

JOHNNY/A23

ABARRIENTOS

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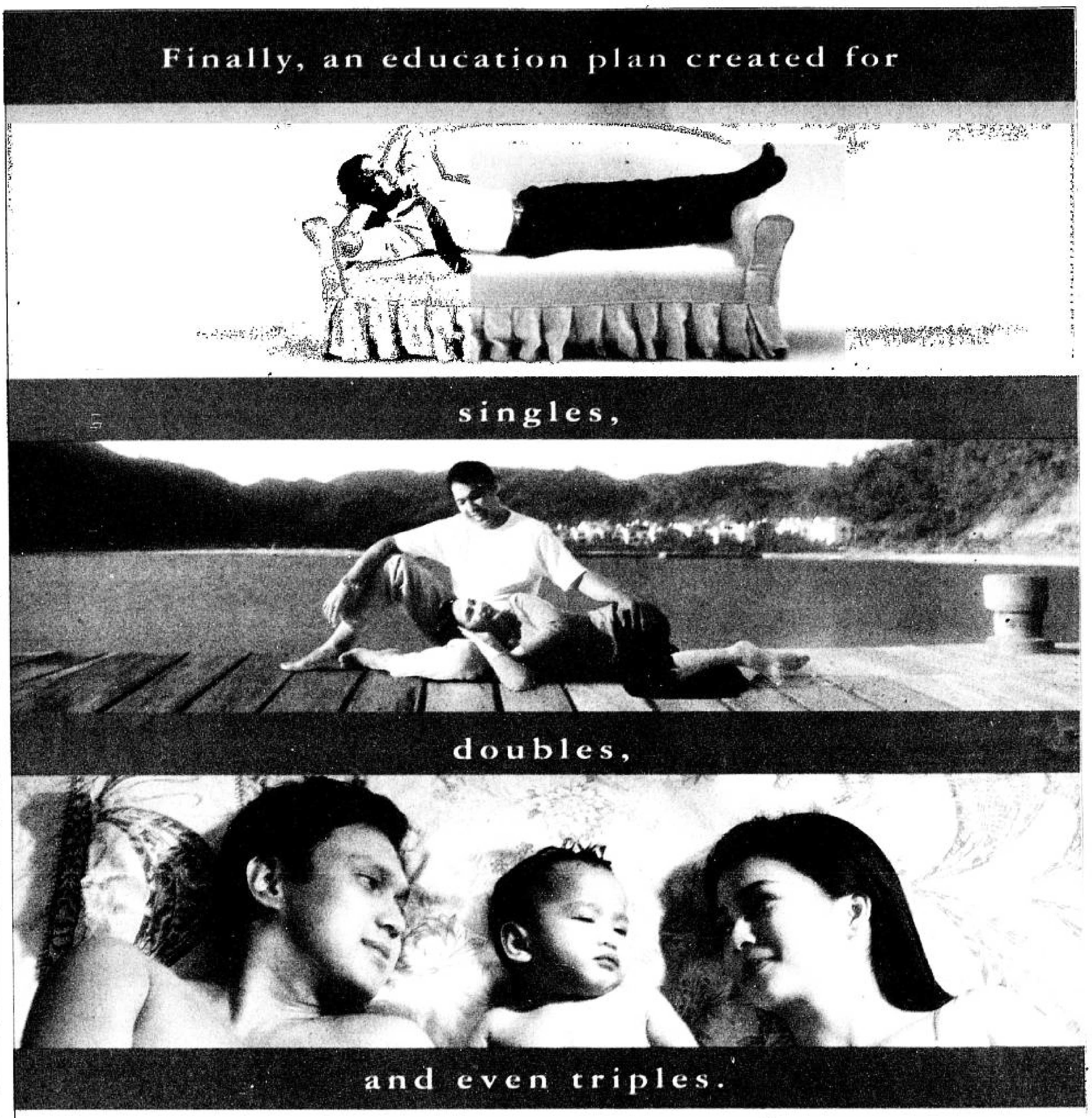
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METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

- Old man's killer gets life A26
- Welder with toy gun shot dead by cop A26

CAMPAIGN TRAIL Page A27

ROTC official threatened Chua, says UST paper

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

"*KUNG hindi pa sila nakakaranas ng* pissed-off *na* military man, *mararanasan nila* (If they haven't experienced the wrath of a pissed-off military man, they would)."

This was the threat allegedly made by Sgt. Genesis Binagatan to Mark Chua and his classmate Romulo Yumul after the two University of Sto. Tomas students exposed alleged corruption in the UST ROTC department that led to the relief of military officer and commandant Maj. Demy Tejares last January.

The statement, which was part of a long taped interview with Binagatan conducted by a UST campus reporter, could shed light on Chua's brutal killing in March, said the victim's father Welson Chua.

In the interview with the UST reporter, Binagatan, a ranking officer of the UST-ROTC administrative staff, was fuming over the Armed Force's decision to relieve him and Tejares as a result of the exposé.

"*Para sa kin, hindi (sila) makatao sa ginawa nila kay* Major Tejares... *parang KSP (kulang sa pansin) lang sila,*" Binagatan said in the interview. "If he's man

ROTC OFFICIAL/ A26

PURISIMA

1999 bar examinee says SC made him 'sacrificial lamb'

BY JERRY ESPLANADA

REMEMBER Mark Anthony Purisima?

The controversial 1999 bar examinee yesterday accused the 15-member Supreme Court of depriving him of due process and making him a "sacrificial lamb."

"The very institution which should be the guardian of due process deprived me of that right and placed me at a dead end," Purisima said. "At this point, there's nowhere for me to go."

He pointed out that the high tribunal is the "court of last resort. After the Supreme Court, you can only appeal to God. So now, I am appealing to God."

Last month, the high court denied with finality Purisima's motion for reconsideration of a

1999 BAR/ A26

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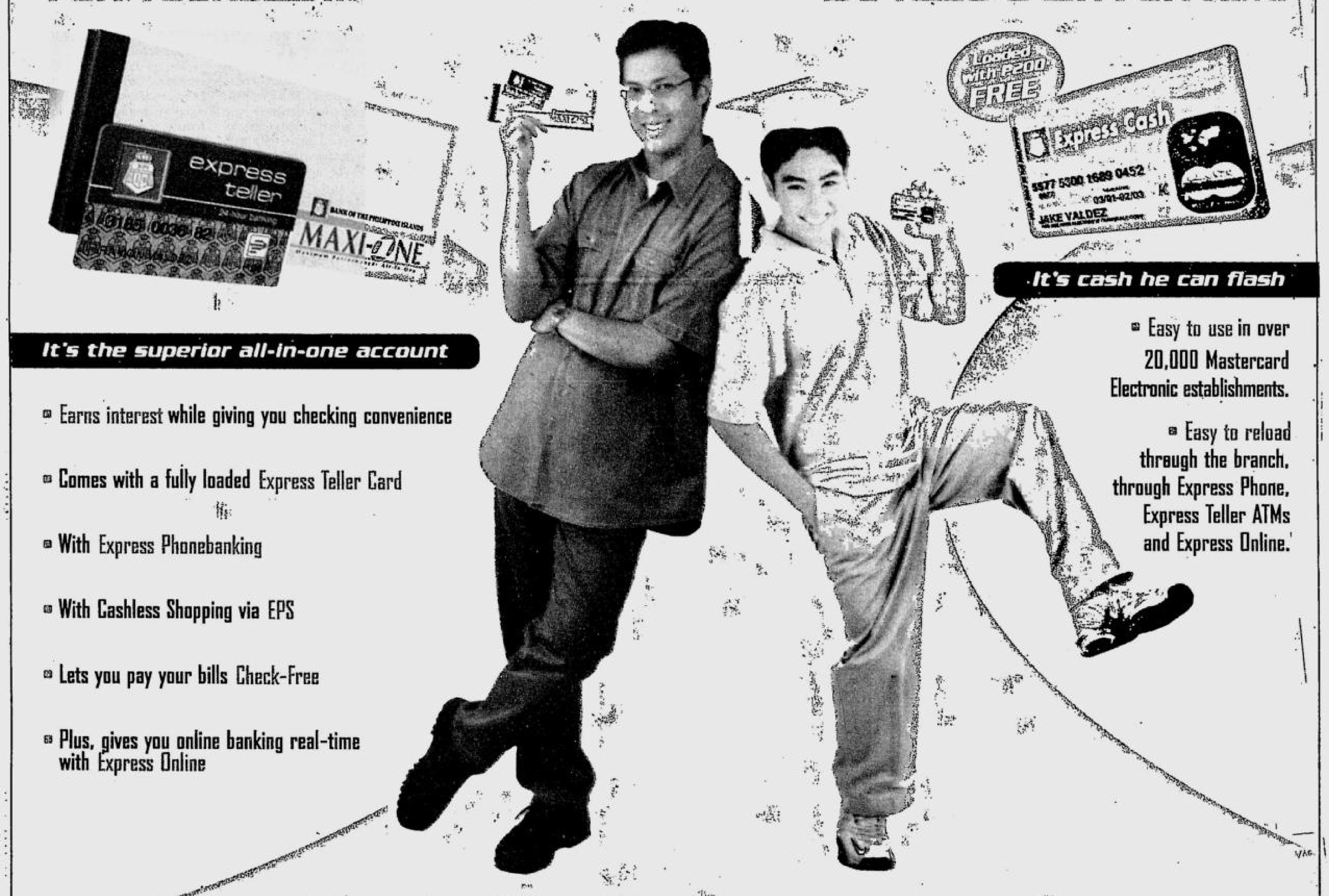

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Welder with toy gun shot dead by cop

A POLICEMAN beat a welder to the draw and shot him dead in Caloocan City yesterday morning. The welder, however, was found to have been using only a toy gun.

PO2 Daniel Liwag of the Central Police District Station 4 and resident of Bagumbong Dulo, shot dead Gerry Avellano, who allegedly ran wild outside a videoke bar in Caloocan about 4:30 a.m. yesterday, police said.

Initial investigation by SPO1 Gaudencio Domingo of the Caloocan Police Station 1 showed that Avellano went wild after residents refused to open a videoke bar in Park View Heights in Bagumbong Dulo.

Councilman Marcelino Susano of Barangay 171 sought police assistance, and Liwag arrived at the scene minutes later. He introduced himself to Avellano as a policeman and asked him to calm down, according to investigation.

But instead of taking Liwag's advice, Avellano allegedly pulled out a gun and threatened to shoot the policeman. Liwag drew his Beretta service pistol and shot Avellano several times.

Avellano's gun turned out to be a plastic imitation of a .9mm pistol, investigators said. He died on the way to the San Lazaro Hospital in Deparo, Caloocan.

Police later found a 10-inch fan knife on Avellano.

Liwag is detained at the Caloocan Police Station 1.

Christian V. Esguerra

Young man killed, 3 others hurt in Sta. Mesa brawl

A YOUNG man was killed and his three companions were seriously hurt in a brawl after they came from a party in Sta. Mesa, Manila yesterday morning.

Michael de la Cruz, 19, of A. Relova Street in Sta. Mesa, was stabbed in the left armpit and lower back by a still unidentified man at about 1 a.m. yesterday, police said.

De la Cruz died while being treated at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH).

His companions Jayson Villaflores, 18, Fernando Pimentel, 23, both of Sta. Mesa; and Nino Vismanos, 20, of Zamora Street in Pandacan, Manila, were also stabbed and are under close observation at the PGH.

The group had just come from a birthday party on Altura Street in Sta. Mesa when the brawl happened, said case investigator SPO1 Virgo Villareal of the Western Police District Homicide Division.

The young men ran into trouble when they ran into the unidentified man on nearby Alegria Street, Villareal said. The group and the lone man traded insults, after which the man pulled out a knife and stabbed the young men, he added.

Christian V. Esguerra

Resto janitor, waiter nabbed for robbing Naia passengers

A JANITOR and a waiter of a restaurant at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport were arrested Saturday afternoon after they were caught allegedly stealing a woman customer's bag that was containing at least P30,000 cash.

Janitor Orlando Domingo and waiter Abdon Morado of the Patio Manila Restaurant at Naia terminal 1 were charged with theft before the Pasay City prosecutor's office.

Only Domingo was in police custody.

Suprema Dumo of Marikina had reported to the Airport Police Department (APD) that she noticed her bag missing after she and her husband left the restaurant around 4 p.m. Saturday, Sgt. Rizalino Torallo said.

During a search in the restaurant, APD members found the bag in Domingo's bag. Other customers, however, implicated Morado, saying he took Dumo's bag.

TJ Burgonio

Thieves strike in 2 factories

TWO factories lost a total of P900,000 in two robbery incidents in Valenzuela City and Caloocan City over the weekend.

Three unidentified armed men entered Gentex Plastic Manufacturing on Lamosa Street in Barangay Ugong, Valenzuela, and took more than P600,000 in payroll money at about 3 p.m. on Saturday, police said. Venancio Ching, 50, is the factory owner.

The robbers proceeded to Ching's office to take the payroll money and the firm's earnings for the day, said Insp. Salvador dela Cruz, chief of the Valenzuela Station Investigation Branch.

One of suspects held hostage foreman Rogelio Zablan, 53, of the Valezuela City Engineering Office, ostensibly to use him as a shield in case police arrived, according to investigation.

The suspects escaped in a silver motorcycle (TH 1891), police said.

At about the same time, three men in a Mitsubishi Galant car barged into Metal Fab Industries Inc. factory on General Luis Street, Bagbaguin in Caloocan and took about P300,000 in cash, investigators said.

The suspects pistol-whipped security guard Gunigal Kanba of Frontier Security Agency, police said.

The robbers then went to the office of administration manager Edna Fuegoncillo and took the cash.

Christian V. Esguerra

ROTC official . . .

(From page A25)

CHUA

enough, *dapat kinausap niya si* Major Tejares."

The INQUIRER tried to contact Tejares on his cellular phone, but he did not reply.

Mark was last seen alive on March 15. Three days later, his body was found floating in the Pasig River in Binondo, Manila.

The body was wrapped in a carpet. Mark's head was wrapped in packing tape and his hands and feet were tied with shoelaces.

Mark's family and friends are hoping investigators would check out the interview tapes so they could pursue the angle that Mark's murder was a result of his exposé of the alleged corruption last December.

Police are still looking for Mark's friends who could testify that he had been receiving death threats before he was killed.

Yumul and other complainants have gone into hiding after Mark's killing, which was widely believed to have been triggered by his revelations.

The tapes and other pieces of evidence will be presented to National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco today.

Last December, Mark and several UST cadet officers filed a complaint with the defense department accusing the UST ROTC department of widespread corruption, extortion and other irregularities."

On Jan. 9, a copy of their complaint was submitted to the UST newspaper, The Varsitarian, which then published a special report on the allegations.

Five days later, Tejares and his entire staff received the relief order.

Having known of the order days before, an angry Tejares allegedly sent several cadets to track down Mark and his companions in the university, according to a friend of the victim.

Tejares formally vacated his post on Jan. 28.

After the exposé, Welson Chua said his son had received many death threats, which he only learned about after his son's abduction and killing.

Chua said investigators told him that the manner of Mark's killing could only be the result of "revenge" and not of an aborted kidnapping for ransom.

Old man's killer gets life

By Christian V. Esguerra

FOR KILLING a 60-year-old driver last year in Navotas, a 31-year-old worker would be spending his life in jail after a Malabon regional trial court sentenced him to life imprisonment.

Judge Benjamin Aquino Jr. found Ronaldo Labrador, of Gulayan Street, Barangay San Jose in Navotas, guilty of killing his neighbor Virgilio Santos on May 2, 2000.

Aquino also ordered Labrador to pay the family of Santos P150,000 in damages.

Santos was sleeping in his tricycle when Labrador stabbed him to death for still unclear reasons, according to court records.

Santos died from the stab wounds while undergoing treatment at the Navotas Lying-In Clinic.

Police surmised that Labrador wanted to settle the score over an old grudge with Santos.

But Labrador told the court he was only acting in self-defense when he killed Santos.

He said he was on his way home when he chanced upon Santos and an unidentified companion, from whom he asked for a light for his cigarette.

But Santos and his companion refused his request, cursed him, and beat him up for no apparent reason, Labrador said.

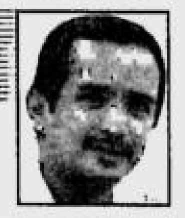
He said he was forced to defend himself with a fan knife, which he used in stabbing Santos.

The court, however, found Labrador guilty after he failed to present substantial evidence to support his claim of self-defense in the killing of Santos.

A done deal, but no politics, please

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad



UNTIL his final hour, the great Flash Elorde had always tried to help others.

And what a big waste it was after the Filipino boxing great, who reigned as world champ for more than seven years, took a treasure of winning secrets to his grave.

Boxing man Hermie Rivera, a tested maker of world champions, assures that had Elorde been tapped to do his share, he would have given everything he knew to help aspiring Filipino fighters improve and go up the international boxing ladder.

Hermie remembers with unconcealed glee how Da Flash nearly fell off his hospital bed after Mr. Rivera himself demonstrated what he had wrongly thought was the left hook, a famous Elorde weapon.

"*Mali, naku maling-mali,*" Hermie remembers Elorde explaining, as the boxing great, locked in a grim bout with lung cancer, laughed and rolled in bed.

Elorde was always there to give winning tips. But if Hermie should ever receive boxing honors one of these days, it's not for the world champs he had made but for having made Elorde laugh in his deathbed.

Anyway, Hermie swears how Elorde would open the doors of his gym in Parañaque seven days a week for poor youngsters, mostly from the province, to walk in and learn the rudiments of boxing.

But imagine what a great help it would have been, adds Hermie, if a boxing academy had already been in place where Elorde could have detailed and lent to learners his winning ways.

* * *

"It's a done deal," exclaimed sportsman Tony Aldeguer from his Cebu office early last week.

Mr. Aldeguer said he got excited after we invited and challenged him to help us in our dream to set up a boxing academy in Cebu.

Tony Aldeguer said it was a noble venture and promptly offered the facilities of his modern gym.

There's no turning back now. The idea is to bring in raw, promising fighters from other capitals, house them in the gym, together with their trainers, upgrade their boxing knowhow through practical demonstrations, lectures, films, fight literature, analysis, etc.

The mini-academy will be anchored on a well-planned curriculum that will be formulated based on the existing problems, mainly on basics, of Filipino boxers.

The course, which should take no more than five working days, will also touch on other facets of the so-called sweet science, including diet, mental toughness, and discipline.

* * *

Of course, the proposed academy readily received tremendous support. Gov. Manny Piñol of North Cotabato, himself a serious boxing scholar, told us to get the project going and vowed all-out support.

Lawyer-sportsman Rudy Salud, founding sec-gen of the World Boxing Council, said he would help us look for possible funding.

Poet-novelist Erwin Castillo, a Golden Gloves silver medalist during his student days at the UP, has come forward and offered to streamline the boxing curriculum based on the immediate needs of young, promising but raw fighters.

Of course, the most solid support came from Gerry Peñalosa himself, who defends his WBC super flyweight international title at the Araneta Coliseum on May 5.

Gerry, with the approval of his manager, Rudy Salud, has agreed to impart knowledge and share with the young aspirants, together with their respective trainers, the wonderful techniques he had logged during a long stint in the Roy Jones camp in Florida two years ago.

Gerry feels that, with the number of interested aspirants, the academy should help hasten the search for more Filipino world boxing champs.

* * *

The Philippine Boxing Federation (PBF), headed by international promoter Jun Sarreal, has vowed to cooperate.

It would, however, be of great help if the PBF this early started talking to its young members, together with their trainers and handlers, to fully detail the basic problems they have been encountering. Their response should go a long way in preparing the desired curriculum for the boxing academy.

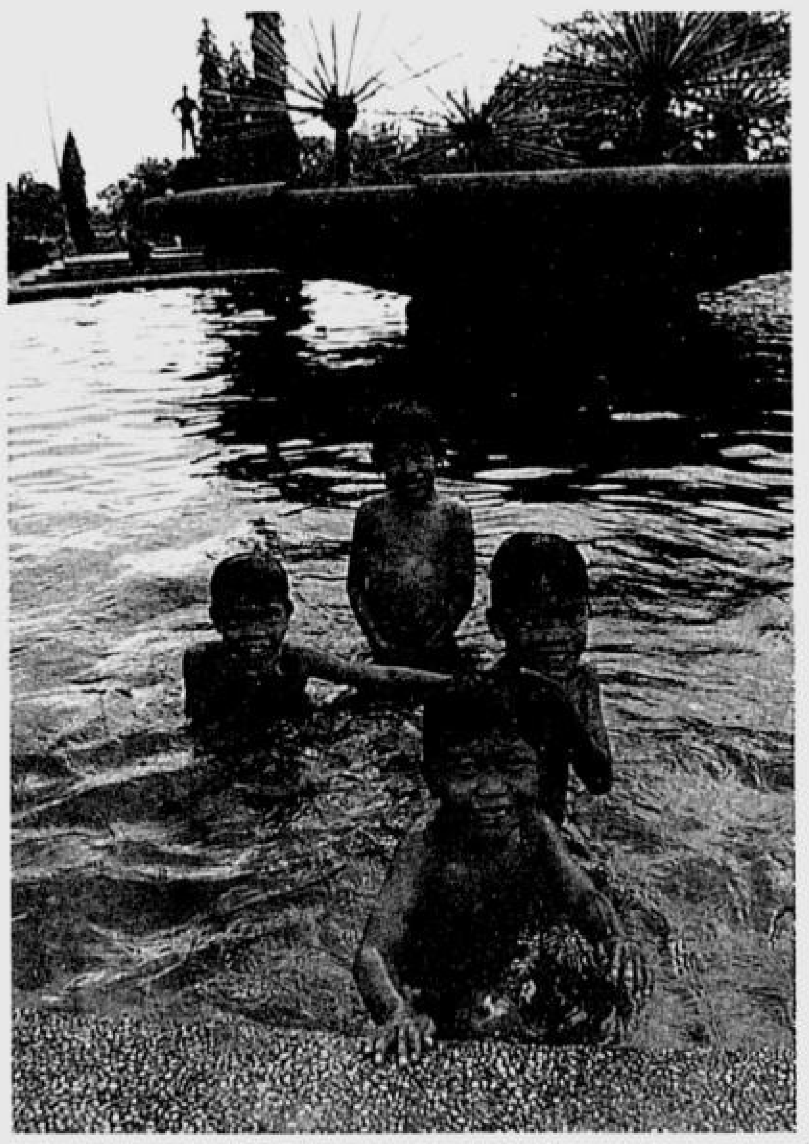
If it succeeds, and there's no reason why it shouldn't, the academy could be redone in other capitals. It could next move to Manila or Davao, depending on practicality and demand.

"My gym, is all yours, but first you've got to come over and visit it," assures Mr. Aldeguer.

Part of the program is the staging of one big fight, possibly a Philippine championship, on graduation eve.

Target date is June, after the elections. To interested parties, please write me at the INQUIRER and start sending in boxing problems that need immediate solutions.

Questions touching on leadership, the GAB, patronage and sports politics will not be entertained.



BOYS OF SUMMER

These boys and their families, unlike their moneyed counterparts, don't have to worry about plane and resort bookings for summer. While many other children spend hot weekends on the beach or in swimming pools, these boys make do with a fountain at the Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila. No fees, no swimwear code, just pure fun, even if the water is impure.

ERIK ARAZAS

Valenzuela judge caught in bribery entrapment suspended, faces probe

CHIEF Justice Hilario Davide Jr. has ordered the investigation of a Valenzuela City judge allegedly caught in the act of receiving the balance of a P10,000 bribe.

The Supreme Court en banc has also decided to suspend Judge Jaime Bautista following an entrapment operation by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation on March 21.

Bautista, judge of Branch 75 of the Valenzuela Regional Trial Court, was allegedly caught receiving the P5,000 balance for a P10,000 bribe reportedly asked from Ranel Panuli, liaison officer of the Sierra Madre Transportation Co. Inc.

Court records said Bautista received an initial payment of P5,000 from Panuli on March 16, apparently for a favorable ruling on a case being tried in his sala.

Charges of robbery and extortion have been filed against Bautista by the NBI before the Office of the Ombudsman.

The Supreme Court also released a memorandum directing acting court administrator Zenaida Elipano to conduct an investigation of Bautista's case and to submit her recommendation in 10 days.

The tribunal said that the suspension becomes imperative "in light of the seriousness of the charge against (Bautista) and of his arrest and filing of a bond for his provisional liberty, and in order to protect the honor and integrity of the Judiciary." *Cathy C. Yamsuan*

1999 bar examinee . . .

(From page A25)

Supreme Court resolution which disqualified him and three others from the 1999 bar examinations.

Purisima, 33, had actually passed the 1999 bar, one of the toughest in the history of bar exams where only 660 passed. The 1999 passing grade was a low 16.59 percent, down from the 1998 passing score of 39.9 percent.

Purisima got a grade of 76.75 percent. The passing mark is 75 percent.

The San Ildefonso, Ilocos Sur native is a nephew of retired Supreme Court Justice Fidel Purisima, who chaired the 1999 bar examination committee.

In an April 13, 2000 resolution, the Supreme Court en banc disqualified Purisima for non-compliance with a basic requirement for bar examinees—submitting a certificate of completion of the pre-bar review course.

The tribunal also declared him guilty of "gross dishonesty" which "renders him unfit to become a member of the Philippine bar when he made it appear in his petition that he was enrolled in the pre-bar review course of the Philippine Law School (PLS) when he filed his petition on July 19, 1999."

The Supreme Court pointed out that PLS "has never offered a pre-bar review course since 1967."

But "it's a clerical, typographical error," the young Purisima said.

"I found out that I was disqualified only in the newspapers," he said. "Normally, when the bar exam results come out, all the successful examinees are listed in the papers whether or not they complied with the requirements. And the Office of the Bar Confidant will notify the examinees to complete their requirements before the oath taking.

"In my case, my name did not appear in the papers. They deviated from the standard practice. They disqualified me for not complying with the requirements. Don't you think that's too harsh a penalty?"

In his motion for reconsideration, Purisima claimed he had "substantially complied" with the examination requirement.

He said his disqualification was based on a "clerical error" in his exam application form which stated that he took his review course at the PLS. "What had petitioner to gain by falsely declaring that he is taking pre-bar review in a school which is not offering such course when at the very same time he was already enrolled and actually taking pre-bar at the University of Sto. Tomas," he said.

He said that contrary to the Supreme Court's claim, "I did not forge, I did not falsify any public document."

In his appeal, he noted "there had also been examinees who were either late or altogether failed to comply with all the so-called requirements. And yet those who obtained passing grades were extended generosity and compassion by invariably allowing them to take their oaths as attorneys."

He appealed for "leniency and compassion, if not benefit of the doubt," saying he has "done nothing that actively brought about the occurrences that made him a sacrificial lamb."

According to Purisima, "it's okay to be prejudiced by, let's say the Office of the President or the Senate, because you can still go to the courts. But after the Supreme Court, where will you go?

"The Supreme Court has the sole prerogative to determine who will become lawyers," he emphasized.

The truth is, Purisima claimed, the high tribunal "just wanted to protect a retiring justice (referring to his uncle) and the integrity of the court and the whole judicial system."

Purisima is also mad at the older Purisima, whom he calls his "ex-uncle." He calls the old man the cause of all his troubles.

He recalled that in April 1999, his uncle was appointed bar chair. "If you're in my shoes and you've already invested one year of review, would you back out? Put that into waste and just wait for another year? If you wait for another year, you have to take the refresher course but you have to review all over again."

"From the very start, (Fidel) knew I was taking the bar. But he wanted the bar chairmanship so badly. And because of that he closed his eyes and refused to admit that I was taking the bar. He refused to inhibit. *Kasi* to take the bar is my right. As long as I comply with all the requirements, nobody can stop me."

Mark Anthony's uncle had earlier claimed he was of the impression that no one in the family would take the bar under his chairmanship.

When the bar results were about to be released on March 16, 2000, the uncle told his peers he would be inhibiting himself from the decoding of the bar results because his nephew was among those who took the bar. He also said he only learned about it two months earlier.

Mark Anthony, however, insisted his uncle knew he was taking the bar.

For his failure to disclose on time that he had a nephew who took the bar exams, Purisima was censured by his colleagues—a first in bar history. Half of his more than P500,000 fee as chair of the 1999 bar examination panel was forfeited.

Gabor offers 'LIFE' to Pasay residents

VETERAN public worker Mina Gabor staged Day One of her campaign for the lone congressional seat of Pasay City energized by the public clamor for change.

A common candidate of Reporma and Aksyon Demokratiko parties, Gabor presented her "LIFE" platform — for livelihood generation, information technology excellence, family centered-ness, and environment management.

A fresh face in politics, the former tourism secretary and exports whiz brings fresh approaches to public service. She is armed with her vast network and expertise in tapping professional help and funding sources for Pasay City's development.

Gabor cited the contrasts in Pasay City: urban infrastructure like the airport, the Cultural Center Complex, the World Trade Center, and the planned hospital at the reclamation site, 80 percent of whose population live in squalor.

"Bagong Buhay, Bagong Pasay" is Gabor's battlecry.

"In my house-to-house visits, I've seen that jobs and access to livelihood opportunities are most needed," she said.

"While we do legislative work in Congress, a congressman with a vision, contacts and programs can directly bring about the necessary changes," she said.

Reyes seeks fair play in Parañaque contest

FORMER Press Secretary and Ambassador Rod T. Reyes, who is running as an independent in the lone congressional district of Parañaque City, urged his leaders not to engage in "dirty politics."

In a meeting at his main campaign headquarters on Dr A. Santos Avenue, Reyes told his political leaders "to play it clean and fair."

Reyes, a seasoned newsman who once practiced investigative reporting that earned him a top journalism award, appealed to his leaders to spend funds only for what is needed during the campaign and not "to buy votes."

Reyes is making his first attempt in the political arena after serving the government as press secretary and later as de facto ambassador to Taiwan. He met his political leaders from 16 barangays in Parañaque City on the first day of the official campaign period.

A motorcade to the different villages and subdivisions around the city was held yesterday to formally kick off his campaign activities.

Gonzales seeks Comelec control of San Juan

REELECTIONIST Rep. Jose Mari Gonzalez has filed a request seeking to place the town of San Juan under the control of the Commission on Elections in view of possible cases of election fraud that might take place in Metro Manila's smallest municipality.

Gonzalez, running for a second term as congressman under the People's Power Coalition-Liberal Party, said he wants the venue of the canvassing transferred from the municipal session hall to a "bigger, spacious and secure" place such as the San Juan Elementary School gym where the proceedings would be more transparent.

He said in his letter to the Comelec that the present municipal and district board of canvassers and the chief of police should be transferred and replaced with other officials from other towns and cities.

"By reshuffling municipal election officials, we will not only get rid of suspicion but we will also be able to prevent conspiratorial relationships that make election irregularities possible," he said.

JV vows to continue his father's legacy

CIVIC leader and businessman JV Estrada on Saturday night vowed to make historic San Juan "one of the country's most prosperous and peaceful municipalities" as he formally launched his candidacy for mayor of the town.

"San Juan is poised to become a model town and a growth center under another Estrada administration," JV told thousands of cheering followers.

Running under the Puwersa ng Masa party, JV said he would continue the "glorious administration" of the "best mayor San Juan ever had, Joseph Ejercito Estrada."

He said he would also pursue the progress-oriented projects implemented by his brother, outgoing Mayor Jinggoy Estrada.

The former Jaycees national president recalled that it was under Mayor Joseph Estrada that San Juan tripled its income, drove crime lords out of town and residents rediscovered their pride in their community.

JV led a battery of speakers representing the members of his ticket in the municipal level. Senatorial candidates of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Puwersa ng Masa coalition endorsed his candidacy.

Former President Estrada raised his son's hand and asked San Juan residents to give his son the support they gave him and Mayor Jinggoy Estrada.

JV is an active member of the Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga, a nongovernment organization committed to fighting drugs. He is also president of various groups, including the firm that brought the West End and Broadway musical "Miss Saigon" to Manila.

Interrupted frequently by applause, the young Estrada said he would "hit the ground running" after election day with five major programs for San Juan.

He vowed to give residents full access to jobs, education and training; help residents develop, finance and operate small businesses; build a cleaner and greener municipality and give the people cleaner air and water.

He said the rehabilitation of the San Juan River would be a cornerstone of his administration.

"San Juan will also enjoy peace and discipline," he told the crowd. "People will be able to walk in the streets at night without fearing for their safety."

Tiangco promotes self-help

NAVOTAS Mayor Toby Tiangco, a seasoned entrepreneur, believes in self-help in fighting poverty.

The youngest mayor in the National Capital Region (NCR) also cited the importance of people empowerment in governance,

Tiangco assures his constituents of leadership that is tough against crooks and kind to the needy.

Tiangco also vowed to crush the drug menace in his town which, he said, victimizes the future leaders of the country, the youth.

He said he doesn't have to throw mud at his opponents just to win votes. "I hate mudslinging," he said. "It's what makes politics dirty."

Tiangco was elected vice mayor in 1998 but became acting mayor following an unresolved dispute over the results of the election for mayor. He took over the post following the death of the incumbent.

Masangkay offers transparency

MUNTINLUPA City mayoral candidate Elizabeth Aguilar Masangkay, a businesswoman and civic leader, has presented a four-point program of action in her bid to make the city a model of growth and development anchored on people empowerment and active participation.

Aguilar-Masangkay said she believes that only through transparency and honest government financial transactions can a local government unit perform and deliver services efficiently.

She cited the experience of her brother, Las Piñas City Mayor Nene Aguilar, who transformed the former salt-bed town into a highly urbanized and peaceful city.

She cited Las Piñas City's well-maintained and well-lighted roads and passageways, well-equipped health and lying-in centers with regular doctors and nurses, business-friendly environment, and mass land housing development, among others.

She said the growth of Las Piñas could be easily duplicated in Muntinlupa.

Stop the mudslinging, Caloocan dad appeals

CALOOCAN City Councilor and vice mayoral candidate Luis "Chito" Abel urged the city's mayoral candidates—incumbent Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo and Rep. Luis Asistio—to dissuade their supporters from engaging in an intense mudslinging war because it has defaced the city.

Abel, who garnered the most number of votes among city councilors in the past three local elections, was referring to the array of posters and campaign materials pasted all over the city which criticize or malign the candidates.

Abel, however, said he is certain that Malonzo and Asistio were not behind the proliferation of these posters but their rabid followers.

Some of the posters read, "*Ayaw namin sa kriminal, gusto namin sa marangal* (We don't like criminals, we like men of honor)," apparently alluding to Asistio's checkered past. Other posters display the front page of a tabloid which reads "Malonzo, *magnanakaw*" and detail Malonzo's allegedly ill-gotten wealth.

There are also posters that reproduced the recent banner story of another tabloid on the arrest of Piting Asistio, the congressman's son, for drug pushing.

Still other posters say "*Wala kang nagawa sa anim na taon, ano pa ang aasahan namin sa tatlong taon? Tama ka na,* Mayor." The apparent response of Malonzo's supporters are posters that say, "*Marami kang nagawa sa anim na taon, marami ka pang magagawa sa tatlong taon. Ikaw* again, Mayor."

Small posters bearing the word "*Pagbabago* (Change)" are also pasted on walls and electric posts.

"We are only putting to naught our efforts to beautify the city and rid it of vandals. Let us help control the further spread of these posters as these cheap propaganda materials are not helping the candidates in any way," he remarked.

Abel appealed to the supporters of the local candidates to help promote new politics in Caloocan by holding discussions or forums with residents on why the candidates deserve to win, rather than vandalizing the city.

METRO CAMPAIGN TRAIL

JOJO BINAY
MERCADO
JOJO BINAY
NESTOR MERCADO
THE PERFORMANCE TEAM

A BIG crowd cheers as Makati mayoral candidate Jojo Binay, his running mate Nestor Mercado, and congressional candidates Teddy Boy Locsin (1st district) and Butz Aquino (2nd district) raise their hands during their proclamation by representatives of the city's people. Binay and his Performance team vowed to continue programs that would further enhance the delivery of services to the people.

City leaders back Atienza

FORMER Manila officials and prominent city residents have thrown their full support behind Mayor Lito Atienza and his running mate, Col. Ernesto "Dionix" Dionisio.

Former Manila vice mayor Fely Cabigao led the group and declared that Atienza's Buhayin ang Maynila urban renewal program was a "success."

"The redevelopment efforts of Mayor Atienza over the past three years has worked to reverse the tide of urban blight and decay and revived many areas in Manila that have long been neglected," Cabigao said.

He cited among Atienza's urban renewal successes were the redevelopment of Plaza Miranda in Quiapo and Plaza Moriones in Tondo.

"Malate is now the premier entertainment and tourism enclave in Metro Manila, Taft Avenue and Rizal Avenue are now well-lighted and clean, Chinatown is very much alive and booming, and Divisoria is also slowly regaining its luster as the country's low-cost, high quality shopping destination," Cabigao said.

Former Councilor Chito Lucero said Atienza's platform of urban renewal is the most appropriate and timely he has seen so far.

Among those who joined Cabigao and Lucero in their support for Atienza were former congressman Nanding Fugoso and former councilors Francisco Varona, Pete Villanueva, Danny Sangalang, Ernie Pablo, Maning Isip, Chino Martinez, Ernie Rivera, Jojit Bunsoy, Rodolfo Robles and Manuel Uy Jr.

DABOY
NANDEZ

STARS OF DIFFERENT STRIPES

What's a Philippine election without movie stars? In Quezon City, ousted President Estrada, a former movie actor, proclaims two fellow actors, LDP-Puwersa ng Masa mayoral candidate Rudy "Daboy" Fernandez (right, above) and his running mate Herbert "Bistek" Bautista. In Cavite, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo endorses reelectionist Gov. Ramong "Bong" Revilla Jr., also an actor. In Pasay City, Megastar Sharon Cuneta (right) raises the hand of mayoral candidate Greg Alcera, whom she described as "a very good man." She apparently believes he's good enough to take the place of her late father, former Pablo Cuneta.

Take Makati division head out—Barbers

MAKATI Vice Mayor Edu Manzano, Councilors Dean Barbers and Mark Joseph are calling for the ouster of Pablito Glean as head of the Business Permits Division in Makati City Hall.

The officials pointed out that the video footage aired recently on the public service TV program "Imbestigador" showed Glean roughing up a GMA cameraman in connection with a case involving Glean's brother Esting.

"Mr. Glean, like it or not, is a public official appointed by the city mayor," Barbers said. "His conduct in the footage is so unbecoming of a public official. *Delicadeza* dictates that he be removed from his position and office by the chief executive who appointed him."

Glean has not been appointed on a permanent status as the head of the Business Permits Division and is presently the division's officer-in-charge, according to Barbers.

Glean is said to be the former chief of security of mayoral candidate Jejomar Binay, the former chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority.

"Public officials are expected to uphold the integrity of their offices at all times," Barbers said. "The GMA 7 footage showed an enraged, violent person who has forgotten the decorum expected of a public official."

A draft resolution urging Makati Mayor Elenita Binay to remove Glean from office has been filed by Vice Mayor Manzano and Councilors Barbers and Joseph.

"We want to preserve the integrity of a city government office," Barbers said. "As the head of the Business Permit Division, Mr. Glean's actions may already be causing irreparable damage to the relationship between our business community and the city government.

"Worse, our constituents are already saying that since Glean was the former MMDA chair's chief of security, he might get immunity," Barbers added.

Bagatsing: Transfer canvassing to stadium

MANILA mayoral candidate Amado S. Bagatsing (PPC) wants the canvassing of votes to be transferred from the Manila City Hall to the Ninoy Aquino Sports Complex (NASC) in Malate, Manila to avoid suspicion and possible fraud.

Bagatsing made the call in support of a request filed by Manila 3rd District election officer Aniceta Laceda, addressed to the Commission on Elections and citing the need to ensure a free, orderly, honest and credible election in the city.

Laceda told Comelec Chair Alfredo I. Benipayo that to avoid suspicion and to be transparent to the public, the change of venue for the canvassing is necessary.

"This is based on my experiences as election officer of Pasay City where I also requested the transfer of the canvassing from the City Hall to the Cuneta Astrodome," she said. "Suspicion of fraud and partisan political activities both by Comelec and City Hall employees were lessened if not avoided."

Bagatsing urged the Comelec to approve Laceda's request, saying she raised valid points, including the cramped space in the offices of the Manila Election Unit.

"The offices of the election officer in the City Hall are indeed too small to accommodate all the ballot boxes plus the watchers from different political parties who will be guarding against possible switching and other kinds of fraud," he said.

Regal holds auditions for new, young stars

REGAL Entertainment is now on the search for new, young, smart, charming and fresh-faced girls aged 16 to 20, to star in a youth-oriented flick opposite the film outfits contract stars such as Cogie Domingo, James Blanco and Danilo Barrios.

Auditions will be held on April 6 and 7, starting 1 p.m. at the Regal studios, No. 38 Valencia st., Quezon City.

Applicants are instructed to bring full body and medium shot photos and bio-data.

Look for assistant director Peter Serrano. No applications on the phone will be entertained.

Dinner dance show

THE HIGH school alumni of the Immaculate Heart of Mary College Batch '76 will redefine dinner and dancing with "Ballroom Nostalgia," a dinner-dance show set to light up the Malate circuit, 7 p.m. at In the Mood, M. Adriatico st., Malate.

The event promises to be one-of-a-kind as batch members bring together a surprising lineup for the night.

To be hosted by Eddie Mercado, "Ballroom Nostalgia" highlights the rendition of several songs by Cathy Melendrez and the performance of ballroom favorites by Christine Hipe, with partner Ruben Enguio of "Eezy Dancing."

"Ballroom Nostalgia" was conceptualized by IHMC Batch 1976 and is organized as a benefit for the Daughters of Charity, IHMC.

For more information, call Jeanette Gatmaitan Reyes at 373-7059 to 60 or Rochee Jameiro Earnshaw at 0917-4005871.

Shopping...

(From page A16)

still obsessed with having nice notebooks, yellow pads, and multi-colored paper for our printers. In fact, if I were to ever have my own store, apart from dreaming of having a franchise of Sephora, the French make-up and fragrance superstore chain, I would love to own a pen and paper store.

Late Friday night I visited Bibliarch in Rockwell and they had all these fabulous Mead paper products. I still remember what a big deal it was in grade school and high school to have the Mead Trapper Keeper.

I went wild over these multi-colored Mead Bungee notepads. They are almost as big as the yellow legal pads, with the notebook ring located on the top instead of the left side, but the paper is so smooth and such a joy to write on.

SM CINEMA GUIDE

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3	DOLBY SURROUND	THE GIFT
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
5	DOLBY SURROUND	THEY NEST
6	DOLBY SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
8	DOLBY SURROUND	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
9	DOLBY SURROUND	BABAENG PUTIK
10	DOLBY SURROUND	TOTAL AIKIDO
11	DOLBY SURROUND	UHAW SA INIT
12	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000

[illegible]Y MANILA 5239240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE GIFT
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	THEY NEST
3	DOLBY SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
4	DOLBY SURROUND	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	WEDDING PLANNER
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	DRACULA 2000
7	DOLBY SURROUND	ERIN BROCKOVICH
8	DOLBY SURROUND	BAIT
9	DOLBY SURROUND	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
10	DOLBY SURROUND	QUILLS
11	DOLBY SURROUND	UHAW SA INIT
12	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG

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3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG

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4	DTS	THEY NEST
5	DOLBY SURROUND	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
6	DOLBY SURROUND	CHOCOLAT
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
9	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
10	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

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2	DOLBY SURROUND	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	UHAW SA INIT
4	DOLBY SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
5	DOLBY SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
6	DOLBY SURROUND	THE GIFT
7	DTS	THEY NEST
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BAIT
10	DOLBY SURROUND	BABAENG PUTIK
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TOTAL AIKIDO
12	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG

[illegible]OUTHMALL 8066968 • 8066782

1	ULTRA SURROUND	BABAENG PUTIK
2	ULTRA SURROUND	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
4	ULTRA SURROUND	THEY NEST
5	ULTRA SURROUND	THE GIFT
6	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
7	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CLOSED
9	ULTRA SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
10	ULTRA SURROUND	TOTAL AIKIDO

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1	ULTRA SURROUND	THEY NEST
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BABAENG PUTIK

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1	DOLBY SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
2	ULTRA SURROUND	QUILLS
3	ULTRA SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
4	ULTRA SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
5	ULTRA SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
6	ULTRA SURROUND	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
7	DOLBY SURROUND	FAMILY MAN

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2	ULTRA SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
3	ULTRA SURROUND	QUILLS
4	ULTRA SURROUND	ALMOST FAMOUS
5	ULTRA SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
6	ULTRA SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
7	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
8	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED

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2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	BAIT
3	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
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6 THE GIFT — in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 MS. CONGENIALITY — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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(Manila) tel 734.8568
1 (DOLBY) THEY NEST
2 UHAW SA INIT
3 QUILLS
4 THE GIFT
5 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
6 BABAENG PUTIK
7 (DTS) BAIT
8 (SDDS) TOTAL AIKIDO
9 (DOLBY) SAVE THE LAST DANCE

Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 UHAW SA INIT
3 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
4 BABAENG PUITK
5
6

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
2 BABAENG PUTIK
3 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
4 (SDDS) THEY NEST
5 UHAW SA INIT
6 (DOLBY) TOTAL AIKIDO
7 (DTS) DRACULA 2000
8 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
9 RESERVE

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
1 (DTS) SAVE THE LAST DANCE
2 RESERVED
3 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
4 UHAW SA INIT
5 (SDDS) TOTAL AIKIDO
6 BABAENG PUTIK
7 (DOLBY) THEY NEST
8 OOPS TEKA LANG

Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 TOTAL AIKIDO
2 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 (DTS) SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
4 BABAENG PUTIK
5 (SDDS) UHAW SA INIT
6 (DOLBY) TOTAL AIKIDO
7 (DOLBY) THEY NEST

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 BABAENG PUTIK

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 BABAENG PUTIK

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson BABAENG PUTIK
Lords UHAW SA INIT
Jeanet WILD SIDE

MARKET!MARKET! Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 UHAW SA INIT
2 BABAENG PUTIK
3 TOTAL AIKIDO
4 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 BABAENG PUTIK

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 THEY NEST
2 TOTAL AIKIDO
3 UHAW SA INIT
4 BABAENG PUTIK
5 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 BABAENG PUTIK
2 UHAW SA INIT
3 TOTAL AIKIDO
4 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
5 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
6 OOOPS. TEKA LANG

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 BABAENG PUTIK
2 UHAW SA INIT
3 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
2 OOOPS. TEKA LANG
3 (DTS) THE BAIT

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 WEDDING PLANNER
2 (DTS) SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
3 (DOLBY) THE BAIT
4 SAVE THE LAST DANCE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
2 UHAW SA INIT
3 BABAENG PUTIK
4 (DTS) TOTAL AIKIDO

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) WEDDING PLANNER
2 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
3 (DTS) THE BAIT
4 SAVE THE LAST DANCE
5 OOOPS, TEKA LANG

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 WEDDING PLANNER
2 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
3 SAVE THE LAST DANCE

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101
1 SAVE THE LAST DANCE
2 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
3 OBJECT OF OBSESSION

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311
1 RED PLANET
2 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
3 OBJECT OF OBSESSION

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 BAIT
2 SAVE THE LAST DANCE
3 WAY OF THE GUN

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 BABAENG PUTIK
3 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
4 UHAW SA INIT

Cabuyao
CINEMAS TEL. (049)5314808
1 (DTS) BAIT
2 (DTS) SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 OOPS TEKA LANG

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 PANABLA
2 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
3 TOO MUCH FLESH

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 TOO MUCH FLESH
2 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 WOMAN ON TOP
4 MS. CONGENIALITY

Berma
tel 879.2168
1 UHAW SA INIT
2 TOTAL AIKIDO

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 UHAW SA INIT
3 BABAENG PUTIK
4 TOTAL AIKIDO

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) PURPLE STORM
2 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
3 BAIT
4 (DTS EX) THE GIFT

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❺ THE WEDDING PLANNER
❻ SAVE THE LAST DANCE
❼ THE GIFT

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❺ TOTAL AIKIDO
❻ SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY

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❷ ALMOST FAMOUS
❸ OOOPS, TEKA LANG
❹ HANNIBAL
❺ CHOCOLAT
❻ THE CONTENDER

DOLBY dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BABAENG PUTIK
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	WEDDING PLANNER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	OOPS TEKA LANG
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	THE GIFT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	TOTAL AIKIDO
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	TOTAL AIKIDO
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	UHAW SA INIT
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	UHAW SA INIT
MIRAMAR	IKAPITONG GLORIA/KAMASUTRA-2
ODEON	UHAW SA INIT
ODEON-2	TOTAL AIKIDO
ROBEN	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
TANDEM-1	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
TANDEM-2	IKA - 7 GLORYA
TIMES	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP / HOT SPOT
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	TOTAL AIKIDO
QUEZON-1	UHAW SA INIT
REMAR	UHAW SA INIT
REMAR-2	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79/633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	BAIT
CINEMA-2	CHOCOLAT
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-64091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
CINEMA-2	BABAENG PUTIK
CINEMA-3	UHAW SA INIT
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	QUILLS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	BAIT
CINEMA-6	PANABLA
CINEMA-7	UHAW SA INIT
CINEMA-8	MS. CONGENIALITY
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	THEY NEST
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE GIFT
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
CINEMA-12	WEDDING PLANNER
CINEMA-14	TOTAL AIKIDO
CINEMA-15	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
LORES	
CINEMA-2	RED PLANET
CINEMA-3	PROOF OF LIFE
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	102 DALMATIANS
CINEMA-2	CHOCOLAT
CINEMA-3	CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON
CINEMA-4	THE GIFT
CINEMA-5	WEDDING PLANNER
CINEMA-6	SAVE THE LAST DANCE

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Misguided handling

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MANY TV programs have done features, discussions or interviews on the latest controversy in show business, involving "Live Show," censorship, freedom of expression, etc. While watching all of those shows, however, we have been boggled by the generally poor or misguided handling that the controversy has received on television.

The coverage has also been occasionally hypocritical, indicating that the TV industry needs its own infusion of positive values. This is immediately apparent when, in the guise of providing visual illustrations of the sexy scenes being argued about, a program runs clips of the movie's erotic scenes.

These shots are masked or blurred to make them fit for home viewing, but this doesn't really solve the problem because the nude outlines and pneumatic action can still be discerned. And some "visual illustrations" go on and on when a few seconds would suffice.

Aside from these obvious visual "attractions," some programs try to generate higher ratings (instead of a clearer discussion of points relevant to the controversy) by inviting guests from both sides of the issue who can be relied upon to scream and shriek, and generally carry on like cats and dogs in a struggle to the death.

You know these types, livid fanatics who think that volume and ferocity can be equated with logic and conviction. Of course, the opposite is true, as all good sense is obliterated in the ensuing fracas, and viewers gain not one whit of intelligent insight into the issue being "discussed."

TV shows can also be faulted for being uncreative in their coverage of the controversy. Most of them cover the same ground and background, which many viewers already know only too well. The result, of course, is tedious repetition and boredom.

Rather, each show should identify smaller but less known or understood aspects of the issue, and explore only one element at a time, but perceptively.

Why don't many TV people do this? Well, it takes more research, thinking and analysis, and they may not have the time, interest or talent to do all that.

Since the controversy will be around for some more time, we urge our TV people to get their act together and serve viewers better with a more judicious and temperate coverage in the days to come. The controversy is quite complicated, so viewers need all the help they can get to better understand its ramifications and repercussions.

Let's hope that television can make itself a positive force in that regard, instead of the shrill distraction and irritation it has so often been in the past couple of weeks.

TV treats

WEDNESDAY, April 3 at 7 p.m. on ABC-5, "Planet X" features are on the Fashion Show Fair at SM Megamall, **Tisha Silang**, and a daring surfer from California.

On Thursday, April 5, at 9 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, the new "Earth Pulse" program presents "Butterfly Politics." Journey to a remote Mexican forest and marvel at one of nature's most spectacular displays, the winter aggregation of 100 million Monarch butterflies!

Sadly, their winter home is threatened by local farming and logging communities that need the trees and land as much as the butterflies.

Another feature, "Wild Animal Rescue," is on the illegal trade in baby gibbons in Thailand.

And, in "Eco-Footprints—Hayden's Adventure," join Australian adventurer **Hayden Turner** as he travels for 25 days from North Africa to North America, while remaining within an "eco-budget."

He uses a strict scoring system to keep track of his resource use in five categories (food, water, energy, waste and transport), with a daily quota of 20 points for each category, or a total of only 100 points a day.

Finally, "Earth Science" shows how toxic waste is created by the manufacture and disposal of the high-tech machines of the information age.

Romeo and Juliet are alive and well in 'Sa Dulo'

By Boots Anson-Roa

YOU look at the brochure of ABS-CBN's *teleserye*, "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan" (Till the end of Time)," and you know that this is modern "soap" with a love story that transcends time and space, forays into history and breathes local color beneath all that predictable froth.

"Sa Dulo . . ." has a buy-one, take-one appeal. It depicts two stories set in different time capsules, but which are juxtaposed masterfully through a well-crafted teleplay.

The story of Angelina (Claudine Barretto) takes place in 1912. She is destined to marry Alfonso (Bernard Palanca), the eldest son of the *Presidente Municipal*, Don Teodoro (Ronaldo Valdez). It is an engagement envied by almost all single men and women.

But unknown to all is the love that Angelina and Benedicto (Carlos Agassi), Alfonso's younger brother, have shared since childhood. Only Angelina's best friend Minerva (Carol Banawa) and Carmela (Shainai Magdayao), the daughter of Benedicto's nanny (Karla Estrada), can attest to their undying affection. It is a mutual understanding sealed with a promise to love each other till the end of time.

When Benedicto goes to Europe to study music, Angelina thinks it is the end of their relationship. Alfonso, unaware of this secret, falls for the lovely lady and eventually offers to marry her. Lonely Angelina learns to open her heart to Alfonso and agrees to accept his proposal.

When the startling news reaches Benedicto, he immediately returns to the Philippines to fight for his undying love for the one and only woman he loves . . . before time runs out.

Meanwhile, the present-day Angeline (Claudine Barretto) is the smart and rich daughter of businessman Norberto (Robert Arevalo) and Corazon (this writer). She is about to marry her fiancé, Hector (Troy Montero), son of Norberto's business partner Menandro (Jaime Fabregas). But Angeline's overly-protective brother Joaquin (Victor Neri) attempts to ruin their romance, believing that Hector, a womanizer, is no good for his beloved sister.

Unknown to anyone, Hector is secretly in love with Sara (Mylene Dizon) who is pregnant with his child. And the only reason he is marrying Angeline is to save the family business.

Parallels

The stories enjoy parallel progress, executed through meaningful audio-visual devices that promise to challenge, if not at times boggle, your mind while tugging at your heart.

The daily 6:30 p.m. mini-series started on Monday, March 26. You are aroused by the rich narrative and dialogue of creative consultants Ricky Lee, Deo Endrinal, and writers Rondel P. Lindayag and Keiko Aquino. You are overwhelmed by the historical allusions of UP researcher Ross Villamil, rendered form and gloss by production designers Manny Morfe and Ronnie Cruz. You are awed by the dynamic and intelligent delivery of every scene by director Wenn Deramas and 2nd unit director Andoy Ranay.

The stellar cast also includes Gloria Romero as the persent-day Carmela, Techie Agbayani, Sharmaine Centenera, Spanky Manikan, John Lloyd Cruz, Luis Alandy, Angela Velez, Justine Cuyugan, Don Laurel, Eugene Domingo, Jojit Lorenzo and Ena Garcia.

We hear that ABS-CBN management has expended practically a whole movie's budget for pre-production, promotion and production of the first two weeks of the series alone.

But lest you also conclude that I am the teleserye's publicist, please know that Olen Enrique, with full cooperation from the network's promo and merchandising departments, handles this part of the job with aplomb.

View from within

I write with distinct advantages: a view from within, as an actress tapped to portray Angeline's mother in the present, the broadened perspective of a former network head (IBC-13) steeped in programming and production, and the unfiltered view of a regular televiewer.

On Tuesday, March 27, taping was slightly, and uncommonly, delayed. The cast members on call, Claudine, Victor, Robert, Jimmy, and this writer, were on the set on time. So were Direk Wen and Andoy and the staff. Breakfast conversation spontaneously veered toward the merits and demerits of the serye's initial telecast the night before, making us oblivious of time.

What we deemed refreshing were the fresh and intelligent contributions of the two younger stars, Claudine and Victor, who delved confidently yet unobtrusively into the spheres of production and direction. May their tribe of professional, hardworking and sensible stars increase!

Ratings-conscious

Admittedly, the biggest challenge for the series was sustaining the story's clarity. A reality check was in order. Did we "connect" with our audience?

So, the series may win an avalanche of awards next year. No doubt, it will sustain its surfeit of commercials. But did we transmit our message clearly? Were we understood? Did the viewer stay glued to the station? Did we rate?

Not that there is anything wrong with being ratings-conscious, especially amidst painstaking efforts at quality. Ratings spawn revenue that the network would need to recoup its huge investments to see this masterpiece through its projected television life.

Feedback was shared, questions were asked the motley group around us. Calls were made. In the process, accolades came for production value, story, performance, and technical merits earlier acknowledged.

Timeless

As to the cliffhanger questions: Ys, the viewers consulted understood the story, worked hard at relating to and imbibing new visual treats set before them. They feasted on traveling through tme and history in less than 30 minutes each day. The technical innovations did not threaten them whatsoever. No gaps were created, after all.

Instead, viewers soared to heights through the most tender love scenes. Proof positive that love does speak a universal language and transcends most boundaries. Romeo and Juliet are, after all, timeless.

BARRETTO

Before "rolling tape," one final question needed to be asked. "If one or two transition details were not clear to you, would you switch channels?"

The common answer was, "*Paano ko masusubaybayan ang istorya at maliliwanagan ang mga nangyayari kung hindi ko ito susundan? Sa umpisa lang iyan. Syempre, kaunting* suspense *muna. Ang importante, maganda ang palabas, mukhang ginastusan pati. At may* bonus *pang dalawang* Claudine."

Even Osang was silenced by the battle of Nora, Vilma fans

By Alex Y. Vergara

PHOTOS BY VAL HANDUMON

CRITICS' CHOICE. Although she lost out to Gloria Romero, Star for all Season Vilma Santos holds the record as the best actress with the most number of trophies from the Manunuri—seven to date.

OUR KIND OF GUY. Superstar Nora Aunor

WHILE the country's film critics protested the current clampdown on freedom of expression, movie stars, led by the inimitable Rosanna Roces, had a ball poking fun at the system during the recent Urian awards night.

Osang, the evening's lone female host, brimmed with naughty retorts and double entendres on and off the air while hosting the five-hour show with filmdom's leading heartthrobs led by Richard Gomez.

Goma also expressed his indignation by wearing a black armband like the rest of the members of the Manunuri. Other hosts in the stellar lineup were Diether Ocampo, Rustom Padilla and Dingdong Dantes.

"Do you want me to stage a live show here, Diet (Ocampo)?" Osang, clad in a revealing white gown by Maxi Cinco, asked in Filipino.

"Please, no," said Diether, feigning alarm. "Let's just introduce our next set of nominees who are good at cutting films. And they're not from MTRCB, Osang."

Diether was actually referring to contenders in the best editing category. Speaking of cuts, Osang's draped white number was cut outrageously high to reveal her ample waist and thighs. A thin rhinestone-studded belt held the dress together.

Photographers scrambled for the best positions as Osang emerged in Cinco's creation. She earlier wore a more decent red gown by Rajo Laurel that covered her vital statistics. But trust Osang not to let the night past without ruffling the feathers of "moral terrorists," as former MTRCB chair and Manunuri member Nicanor Tiongson describes his dectrators.

Osang tried to appear nonchalant at first, but after seeing the swarm of photographers pointing their cameras her way during a commercial break, she gamely tilted her body to one side to reveal her flawless gams.

"*O, sige na nga,*" she giggled, before a burst of flashbulbs greeted her.

"This is what you call freedom of expression," she winked, as she leaned again to reveal her other side. Richard, who was beside her, could only smile and shake his head.

Five-minute break

Members of the Manunuri deemed it wise to give themselves and their guests a five-minute break halfway into the nearly five-hour show. It was the first time in our long years of covering such marathon events that both fans and celebrities received such courtesy.

All of them, of course, show a deep respect for Filipiniana and the performing arts. This was literally reflected in a stage featuring a Filipino-Spanish inspired home, garden and trellis covered with real and artificial greens. Gardeners later took advantage of a lull in the show to sprinkle the plants.

A number of the Manunuri members reportedly protested the producer's choice of Ruffa Gutierrez, who annotated the Gawad Dekada in taped snippets during certain portions of the show. Principled souls were said to have deemed Ruffa, who was embroiled in the infamous Manila Film Festival scam seven years ago, unacceptable.

Lorna Tolentino, also a taped annotator like Ruffa, was said to have declined the job soon after learning that she wasn't in the best actress circle. Friends and supporters reportedly prevailed upon her to put her *tampo* aside.

Noranians vs Vilmanians

As usual, die-hard Noranians and Vilmanians managed to sneak in despite the presence of ushers and usherettes. Their admiration for their respective idols again degenerated into a shouting match. Both Nora Aunor and Vilma Santos were recipients of the Gawad Dekada for winning the highest number of best actress awards during the past decade—three each.

Vilma caused a pandemonium as her eager fans cheered her arrival. Vilmanians positioned themselves on the left side of the theater, while Noranians, wearing identical aqua T-shirts, later occupied the other side. Richard egged them on.

"Don't worry, the other camp (Nora) is expected to arrive, too," he said in Taglish.

Rustom further fanned the rivalry by asking each of them to make their presence felt as he pointed from one group to another. Of course, they lost no time shouting at the top of their lungs.

Talent manager Douglas Quijano was rudely interrupted when Nora, wearing a black suit, marched into the theater followed by her rowdy band of loyalists. They shouted and waved aqua banners at the mere mention of Nora's name.

A big placard held by one of the Superstar's supporters screamed, "We love you, Ate Guy!!!—GANAP."

"Nora! Nora! Nora!" they chanted like a mantra as she went up the stage to receive her Gawad Dekada.

Vilmanians didn't take things sitting down. They also carried a set of similar posters that formed their idol's name and a tagline, "D Real Queen." Several diehards even held aloft campaign posters of senatorial wannabe Ralph Recto, Vilma's better half.

Noranians were stilled as Vilma, in a semi-beaded aqua gown that ironically matched the T-shirts worn by her archrival's admirers, went onstage. It was the Star for all Season's fans' turn to chant her name: "Vilma! Vilma! Vilma!"

For a few moments, members of the Manunuri dropped their clenched fists as people inside theater became too enthralled by the spectacle. Not even Osang's glib tongue and outrageous outfit could probably match that.

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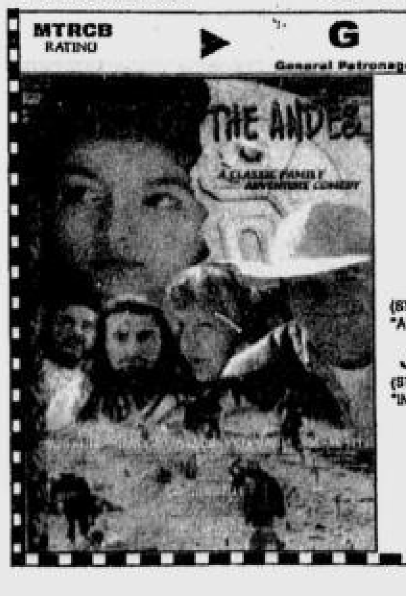
102 DALMATIANS - G 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:50, 9:00	CHOCOLAT - P 13 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10	CROUCHING TIGER - P 13 11:20, 1:50, 4:20, 6:50, 9:30
THE GIFT - P 13 12:00, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00	WEDDING PLANNER - P 13 12:30, 2:55, 5:20, 7:45, 10:10	SAVE THE LAST DANCE - P 13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00



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JOHN RHYS DAVIES
(STAR OF "RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK", "INDIANA JONES & LAST CRUSADER")
ROSHAN SETH
(STAR OF "GANDHI", "INDIANA JONES & THE TEMPLE OF DOOM",)
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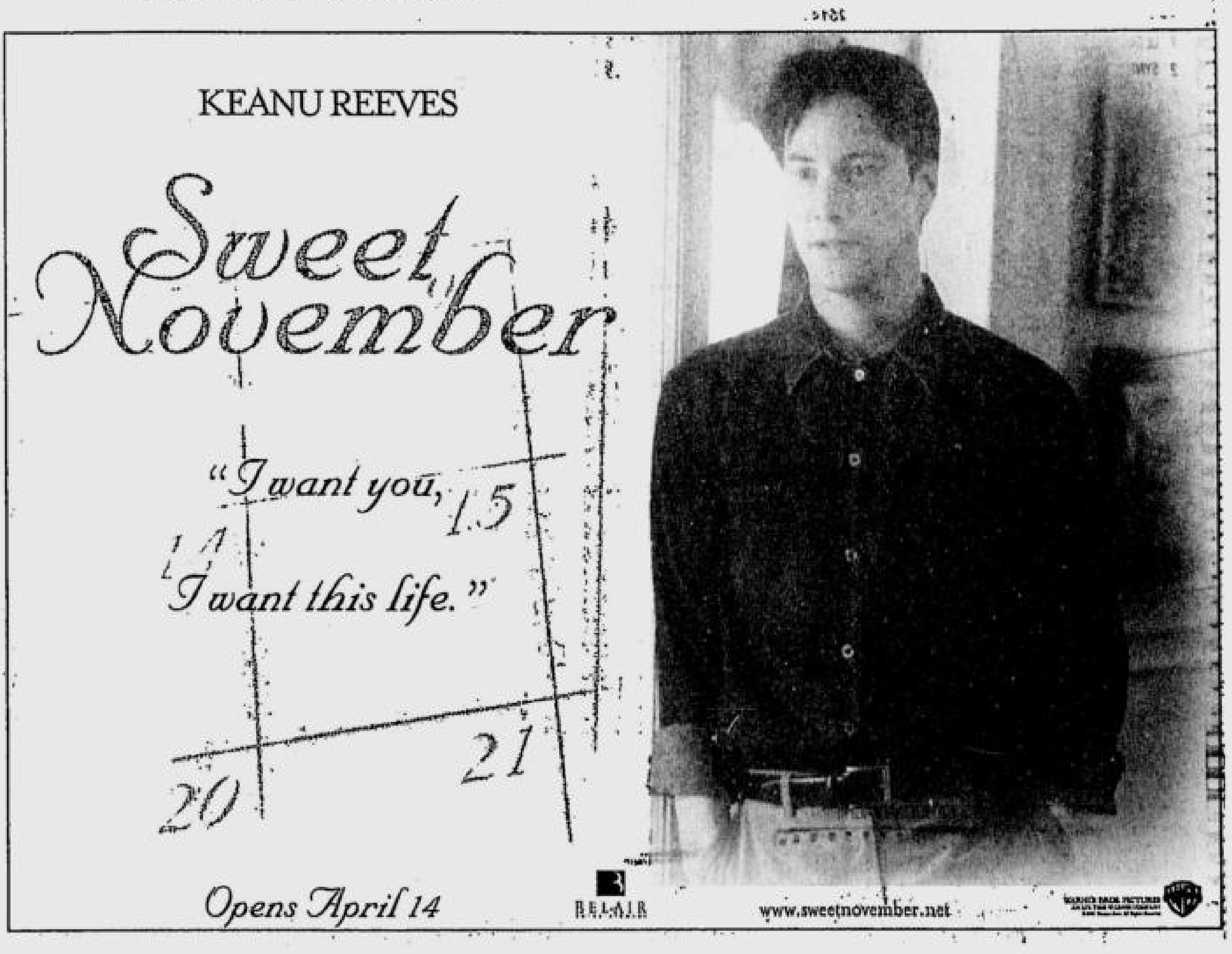

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Shopping for summer

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

LET'S indulge in my favorite year-round pursuits—retail therapy and eating well.

Joshua and I went swimsuit-shopping the other night in preparation for our Holy Week vacation, which we'll be spending with my mom and the rest of the family in La Union and Tarlac.

The free-standing Speedo store in Glorietta has an excellent selection of colorful bikini trunks. (Josh's preference, regardless of the fact that at 5 years old he has a 26-inch waistline.) And for myself I got the Boyleg Tankini, which somehow manages to give the illusion of a curvier waistline, and thankfully manages to hide most of the cellulite and stretch marks around my hips and upper thighs.

The new summer prints are ethnic-inspired and come in both fuchsia pink and aqua blue. My only wish is that the tank top could have been equipped with underwiring and Miracle Bra-like foam padding to give breasts some figure-enhancing lift.

Speedo also had a good selection of boys' beach sandals, which are more moderately priced than the ones available in Nike outlets and Birkenstock distributors.

If you feel like splurging, the new Victoria's Secret Swim 2001 catalogue just came in the mail. They have beautiful Miracle Bra tank suits, camikinis, bandeau tops and bikinis in colorful, geometric, floral and animal prints. The great innovation is that they have matching swim skirts, sarongs and sarong pants.

The collection, though, is pricey, from $48-$98, with additional shipping costs. You can order their catalogue by calling their US client services at 614-337-5122 or by logging on at www.VictoriasSecret.com.

***

I've found excellent makeup removers that don't cost as much as my favorite Chanel Precision line. In fact they cost just a fraction of the price of Chanel but really get the job done.

Try St. Ives Makeup Remover and Facial Cleanser, which has chamomile. You can tissue it off, or rinse it off, because it is water-soluble.

The cleanser isn't at all greasy but works quickly in dissolving your foundation and blush. I wear studio-strength concealer, foundation and blush (it has to be thick enough to withstand the powerful studio lights) much thicker I'm sure than what most women wear on a day-to-day basis.

If it's that effective for me, it's bound to be good at getting the job done for those wearing lighter makeup. (St. Ives is available in most supermarkets, department stores, and drugstores.)

I wear thick coats of mascara, eyeliner and eye shadow as well as eyebrow pencil and groomer, and I'm particular about getting every trace off. Andrea Eye-Q's Ultra Quick Eye make-up remover pads are the most convenient I've tried because they no longer require you to pour out the eye makeup remover solution onto a cotton ball or cotton pad. They are time-saving, mess-free and they cleanly swipe away all your eye makeup, even hard to remove waterproof mascara.

Andrea Eye-Qs come in a blue plastic jar containing 65 pads, cost P185, and are available in all Beauty Bar branches and Rustan's Le Drug.)

***

I've been trying to increase my body's resistance by drinking more fresh fruit juices. My friend **Tatus Aldana** gave me an Oster juice extractor for my birthday, and it's excellent because it gives you the choice of just having the juice, or mixing in the pulp, since the extraction process separates the pure liquid from the pulp.

Watermelon is very refreshing and needs no added sugar. Cantaloupe melon is yummy, and I've been mixing it with carrot juice to get a higher dose of vitamin A. *Dalandan* juice is also very good, and again I've tried adding carrot juice to it and the result is still very satisfying. Fresh pineapple and *dalandan* beats the canned variety any time.

We're so blessed to have many delicious fruits and I've finally learned to take advantage of their abundant vitamin supply. When the pulp is included I've noticed how great my digestion is. And since I increased my juice intake, my skin has really been glowing.

***

I feel most comfortable wearing a denim jacket for almost any occasion. The jacket helps hide my big upper arms and camouflages my *bilbil* after I indulge in a heavy meal.

But the heat of this summer is making it difficult to still look fresh when wearing my favorite fashion staple.

I've found the perfect compromise. Several weeks ago I wrote about @ the Store, the Pasay Road store above Tesoro's, which is the authorized distributor of Gap, Banana Republic, and Old Navy clothing in the Philippines. I visited them again recently, and they had this Gap, very faded, lightweight, fitted, stretch denim jacket that's absolutely the perfect summer cover-up.

I mixed it with a tank top over a brightly colored below-the-knee skirt, and the look was summer casual, yet put together—and no unsightly bulges in sight!

***

Most girls (and gays, for that matter) I know are

SHOPPING/A14

SIDE A LEADS SUBURBIA LINEUP

Side A leads the talented lineup of bands that will perform at Suburbia Malate this month. Known as Manila's premier band for the past 15 years, Side A dishes out a mix repertoire of pop, ballad, R&B and dance. Catch them at Suburbia on April 2, 4, 9 and 11, before they fly to Australia for a series of concerts. Other performers are Judith Banal with SOB on Mondays (April 16 and 23), Big on Tuesdays, Escape back to back with Side A on Wednesdays, 7th Soul on Thursdays, Freeverse and Spindrift on Fridays and Elements on Saturdays, with Bulk on April 7 and Pido With Take One on April 21. For inquiries, call 450-1685.

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Gov't urged to sell 40% of Pagcor through IPO

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration has received a proposal from the Investment Houses Association of the Philippines to offer 40 percent of the shares of stock of Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. through an initial public offering.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said the proposal could help the government raise as much as P50 billion from the stock market.

"The proposal of IHAP was for us to have an IPO for Pagcor that could raise P40 billion to P50 billion for the government. Aside from the earnings, it could boost the local stock market," the finance chief said.

Romulo said potential earnings from the IPO could be much higher than proceeds from the securitization of future earnings from the state-owned gaming firm.

The finance chief earlier said the government could securitize about P56 billion in future earnings of Pagcor. He computed this based on the gaming firm's average annual profit of P8 billion multiplied by a seven-year maturity.

"But not all of these earnings could be securitized because not all of the amount goes to the government," the official clarified.

Romulo said Pagcor still has an exclusive franchise to operate and oversee all gaming operations in the country for the next seven years until 2007. He said the franchise could be extended by Congress.

Still, the finance chief said the Department of Justice has to give the finance department the go-ahead before it could securitize earnings or publicly list the shares of Pagcor.

The government had planned to issue bonds or notes backed by the earnings of Pagcor as well as some assets of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and Clark Development Corp.

Under the proposed scheme, the government would issue debt instruments such as bonds using its future earnings from these companies as collateral. In effect, the government would collect revenue in advance.

"We are doing this to bridge the (budget) gap. We want to contain the deficit to convince investors that we are serious in implementing fiscal discipline," Romulo said.

The budget deficit in the first two months of the year had reached P16 billion from only P9 billion last year under the Estrada administration. Romulo said the budget gap this year could worsen to P225 billion because of inherited obligations from the previous government.

He noted, however, that the economic team was determined to bring down the deficit to P145 billion or possibly even P130 billion. Last year, the budget gap deficit swelled to P136.1 billion compared to a target of P62.5 billion.

"We first have to get a DOJ opinion and we also have to time it when the market is ready," said the finance chief.

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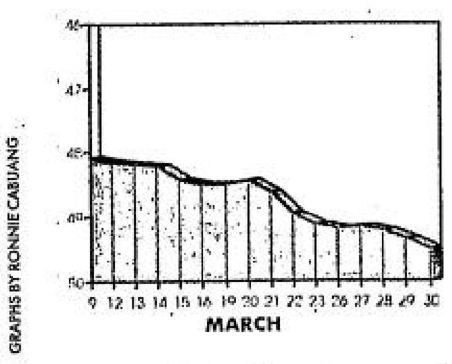


GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

Peso-Dollar Rate

₱49.51 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 30, 2001

¥125.26 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 125.26 as of 5 p.m., March 30, 2001

GOLD:$259.00/259.50
per ounce Hong Kong, March 30, 2001

Trading to remain weak

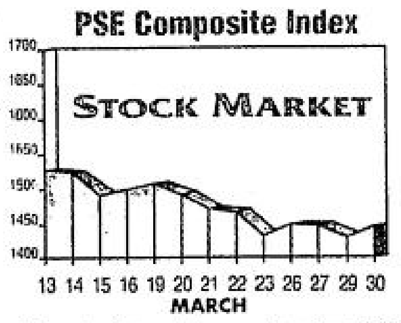
ANALYSTS forecast weakness to persist in the local stock market in the coming weeks due to lack of positive news.

Share prices rose 1.1 percent on Friday due to bargain-hunting. The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 16.24 points to 1,446.40.

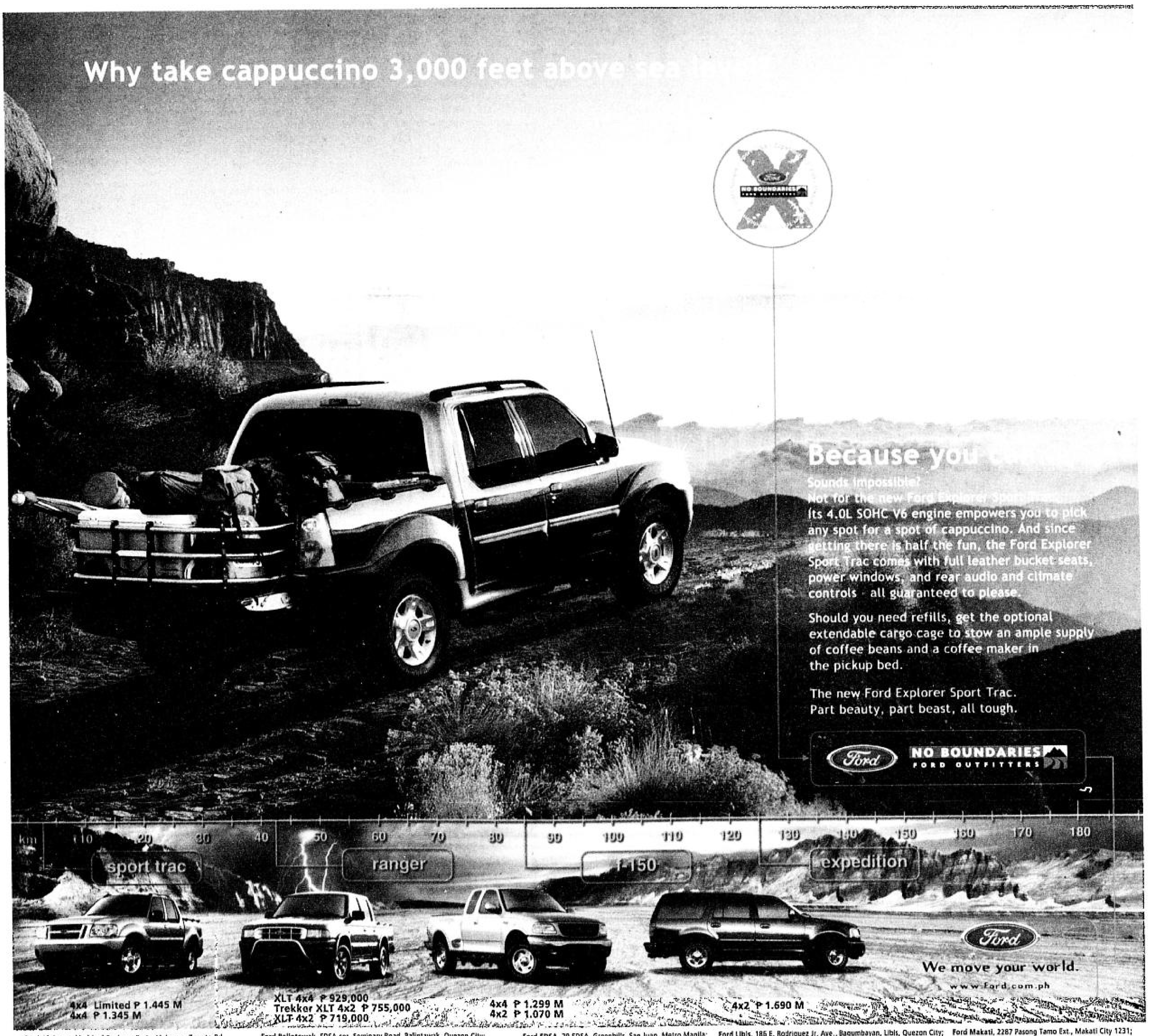
"This is a ho-hum market. With thin volume, this kind of market indicates low investor-

TRADING/ B10

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B6)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Easing of export rule on foreign firms sought

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has proposed to lower the export requirement on foreign-controlled companies from 70 percent to 50 percent of their annual output to put them on equal footing with Filipino-controlled exporters.

By leveling the playing field between Filipino and foreign companies, in terms of export requirements for incentives granting purposes, the DTI is hoping to attract more foreign investors who are also keen on selling a substantial portion of their production to the domestic market.

The move is also meant to give foreign-controlled export companies some leeway in coping with the economic slowdown in the US and Japan which is expected to lead to lower demand for Philippine export products.

One of the expected immediate beneficiaries of the proposal is Philip Morris International which has been inquiring with the Board of Investments on whether its planned $300-million cigarette manufacturing facility in Batangas is eligible for incentives.

The BOI earlier said Philip Morris' project might not be qualified for incentives since its export commitment fell short of the requirement on foreign-controlled companies which was 70 percent of the total output.

Philip Morris is planning to export only about 30 to 40 percent of its proposed annual output of 30 billion to 40 billion cigarette sticks. Philip Morris will take an 80-percent stake in a joint venture with longtime partner La Suerte Cigar & Cigarette Manufacturing Co. The project is expected to start operations in 2003.

The DTI proposal on the reduction of the export requirement, however, needs Congress' nod which means that Philip Morris and other foreign companies with the same concern have to wait for at least a year before they can be eligible for incentives.

For foreign firms that need immediate relief from the 70-percent export requirement, the DTI has agreed to allow them to ship out less than 70 percent of their output for the next two years, on a case to case basis, on condition that they will make up for the shortfall in the future.

For example, if a company exports 50 percent to 60 percent of its output from 2001 to 2002, it must ship out 80 percent to 90 percent in 2003 to 2004 to meet the minimum 70-percent export rule. Foreign-controlled companies face losing their fiscal incentives if they would fail to comply with this export requirement.

This policy is expected to assist garment and textile exporters, such as Indophil Corp., which have to adjust with the changes made by the DTI in the quota system.

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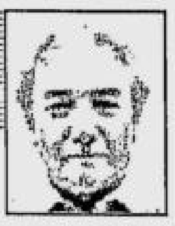
The biggest voting bloc

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General



EVER since Ramon Magsaysay foisted himself as the Champion of the Masses, every person who has ran for high office has wooed the small voters—the *manggagawa, magsasaka, mangingisda, mahirap, maralita* and the *maliliit*. In short, the *masa*.

Of course, the concern for the poor is absolutely necessary, both for political and charitable reasons, in a Christian country like the Philippines. As a result, every administration has waged a war against poverty. The programs for low-cost housing, rolling retail stores, small loans at below market rates, and doleouts during presidential visits to squatters areas, to name a few, are all meant, not so much to ease the plight of the poor, but to win their votes.

After all, the popular notion is that the vast majority of voters are at the lowest classes—the "D" and "E" classes—of society. This notion may have been valid in Magsaysay's time. It is not valid now. Today, there is a sector of the electorate that has steadily grown into what could be the most powerful force in Philippine politics. It is the richest lode of voters waiting to be mined.

This sector is the membership of the Social Security System (SSS). Let us consider the following:

1. SSS members are the private sector employees. They are the taxpayers who keep the government going. They are the consumers who keep the economy humming.

2. SSS members are the informed sector. They read the newspapers, listen to radio and watch television.

3. SSS members' contributions are a considerable and steady source of investible funds fueling the economy. SSS is the largest funds provider for low-cost, high risk mass housing loans.

4. Ten percent of the SSS members are self-employed and small businessmen.

5. Over 60 percent of SSS members are minimum wage workers, the employed urban poor.

6. SSS members hold sway over the *masa*. They employ the domestic help and they are the customers and benefactors of the *masa*.

7. SSS members are the independent and intelligent voters who go to the voting booths on their own. They need no doleouts and their votes are not for sale.

8. SSS members are not a faceless, nameless mob. They are real people with real faces, real names and real addresses.

9. SSS members are the single biggest identifiable block of voters in the country. As of last November, SSS members were almost 23,000,000 strong.

Incredibly, no political strategist has ever thought of tapping this huge bloc of votes. Perhaps, SSS is too complex.

In the US, SSS reform is always a big political issue. During his two terms, President Clinton had always something to offer SSS members every time he opened his mouth. In the last presidential campaign, SSS reform was a major item of debate between Gore and Bush. Today, President Bush is about to unveil his SSS reform program.

Here, the SSS is a milking cow. Every time a politician thinks of a pro-poor program, where do you think the money for it will come from? From the SSS, of course. The sagging stock market needs to be propped up? Call SSS to pour money into stocks. A typhoon devastates Manila, let SSS lend money at cheap rates to the victims. Do you want to encourage SSS members to go into small-time businesses? Open a window at SSS where they can borrow seed money at lower than market rates.

How do you win over such a huge and varied sector of the electorate? By taking advantage of the fact that SSS members are stitched together by their contributions to the system. Everybody has money tied up in the SSS. This is the bond that ties the members as one.

Winning the SSS vote is the key to victory in the current midterm elections. It also paves the way for the Grand Prize in the presidential elections in 2004.

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Phone companies' help sought to curb cellular phone theft

By Anthony O. Alcantara

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission has ordered cellular phone companies to block stolen cellular phones from their networks in a bid to stop mobile phone theft.

NTC Commissioner Eliseo M. Rio Jr. said the NTC has been working on an agreement among cellular phone companies to make the plan successful.

"It is technologically possible to block a stolen cell phone. However, there is no concerted effort among cell phone companies to block these stolen phones. Even if one company blocks a stolen unit from its network, it could still be used in another network," he said.

He said that mobile phone users could register their phones and their cell phone IDs so that their units could be blocked and rendered useless when stolen. He said that special stickers bearing the warning that the units could not be used when reported stolen would be placed on cellular phones.

"We hope to come up with an agreement by the end of April so that we could begin our campaign by the first or second week of May," said Rio.

The NTC recently signed a memorandum with Globe Telecom, Smart Communications Inc., Pilipino Telephone Corp. and Isla Communications Inc. to put in place a system that will deter cellular phone users from sending or forwarding abusive or obscene text messages.

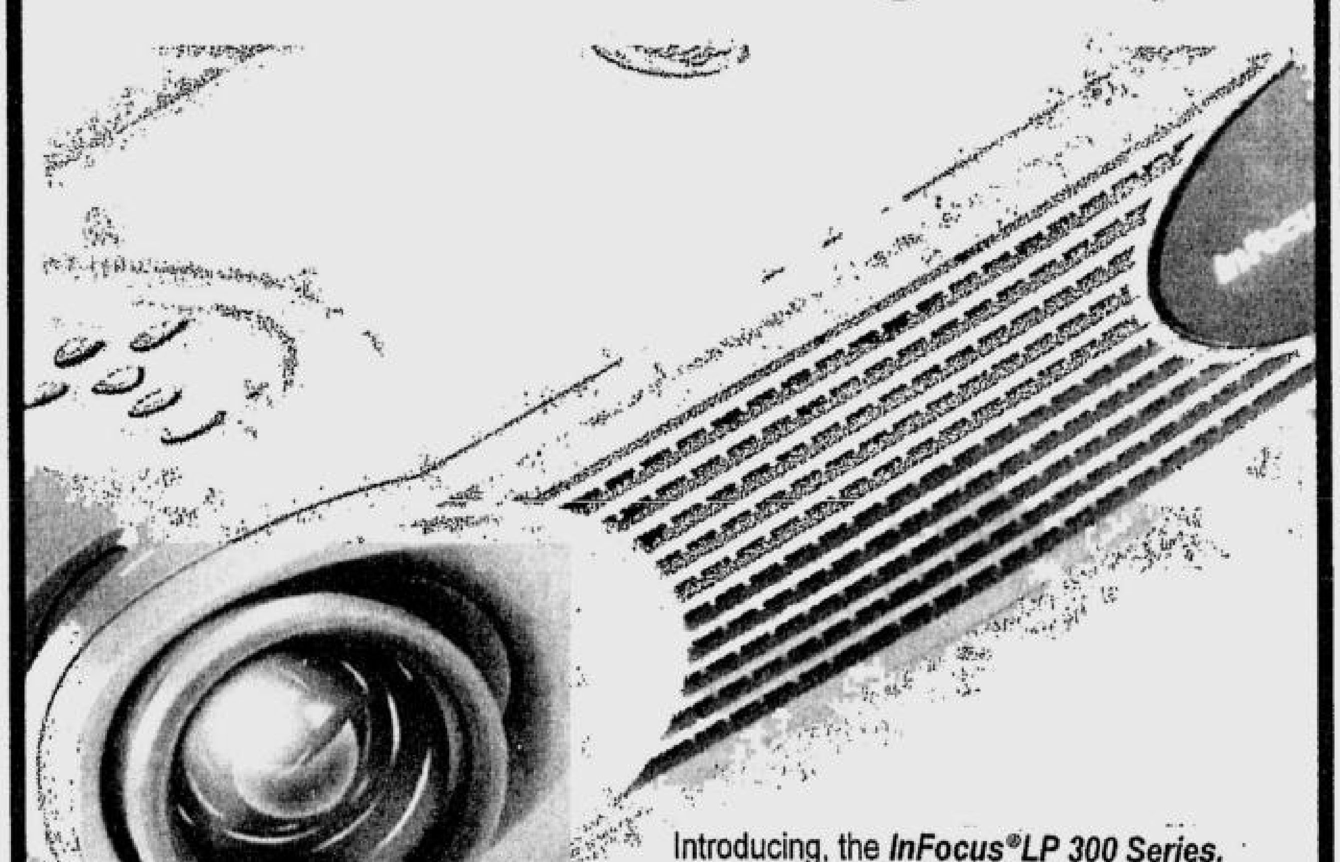
Interconnection remains a major concern of the NTC. A new set of rules that will govern interconnection arrangements among phone companies is being prepared.

"We are now preparing the new IRR (implementing rules and regulations) for interconnection. It will be a transition from the present setup to the cost-based approach for wholesale rates," said Rio.

This is expected to result not only in lower interconnection charges between carriers, it is also seen to encourage an increase in the traffic between different networks.

With this wholesale rate approach, phone companies will negotiate among themselves their rates depending on the volume of calls handled.

Big Things Come In Small Packages



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RP foreign debt stock hit $52.06B last year

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE COUNTRY'S foreign debt stock slightly increased to $52.06 billion as of end-December last year from $51.846 billion in the third quarter.

But for the entire year 2000, the level of foreign debt was 2.2 percent lower than the end-1999 level of $52.21 billion despite a 19-percent drop in the value of the peso during the period.

The government had reported earlier that the country's foreign debt stock slid 10.4 percent to $46.4 billion in end-December but final figures from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed the debt level hit $52.06 billion.

The BSP said the country posted a $1.211-billion increase in net borrowings last year, of which $499 million came from national government transactions while $712 million came from private sector deals.

But the increase in net borrowings, which could have drastically pushed the debt stock up, was offset by the decline in the value of the Japanese yen versus the US dollar.

From 107.58 yen to $1 in September, the yen fell to 114.46 to the dollar by end-2000. This led to a revaluation adjustment that amounted to $889 million.

The foreign debt stock data of the BSP covers foreign borrowings of the government and the private sector that were obtained with the BSP's approval.

The increase in net borrowings of the government and private enterprises was largely due to the weakness of the peso last year.

The peso last year weakened from about 43.50 to $1 in early July to more than 49 to $1 in September and to about 52 to $1. The peso hit a historic low of 54.79 to $1 early this year.

Based on government computations, a P1 depreciation versus the dollar result in a P7-billion increase in the country's debt servicing obligation.

Last year, the maturity profile of the foreign borrowings of both the government and the private sector remained favorable given the continued efforts of the government to restructure loans by prolonging their maturity and keeping rates at the lowest possible levels.

Medium to long term loans or those payable over a period of more than one year continued to comprise close to 88.6 percent of the total debt stock with the average maturity exceeding 17 years.

The share of short-term liabilities to the total debt stock declined to about 10 percent from over 11 percent.

The obligations of the public sector—the national government, state-owned corporations, government financial institutions, and the BSP—represented about two-thirds of total external debts while the private sector accounted for the balance.

About 48 percent of the external debt was owed to official creditors such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, foreign government and export credit agencies.

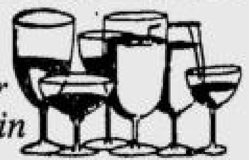
More than a quarter or 25.8 percent of the debt stock was in the form of debt securities such as bonds and notes that are traded in the offshore markets.

Obligations to private banks and other foreign financial institutions constituted about 21.5 percent of the outstanding debt.

The country's foreign loans were mostly dollar- and yen-denominated accounting for 54.5 percent and 26.9 percent, respectively.

The country's debt service burden (principal and interest payments) remained manageable at about 12.23 percent of the estimated value of exports and income last year.

COCKTALES



By Victor C. Agustin

Détente with Danding

IF YOU go by the pronouncements and legal tactics of the Office of the Solicitor General and the PCGG, it is reasonable to assume that the Macapagal-Arroyo government is willing to co-exist with Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. in the management of San Miguel Corp.

In the case to be filed by the OSG and the Presidential Commission on Good Government this morning at the Supreme Court, the government is only seeking the removal of the five Estrada appointees but not the chair and his right-hand man, Ramon Ang, in the San Miguel board.

Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo even went as far as saying that, contrary to the previous Malacañang practice of a complete shutout, he prefers that the Cojuangco-Lobregat group be given the right to appoint up to five board seats in the 15-member Cocobank board as well as another proportionate representation in the bank's audit committee.

This, in so many words, is an acknowledgment of the Cojuangco-

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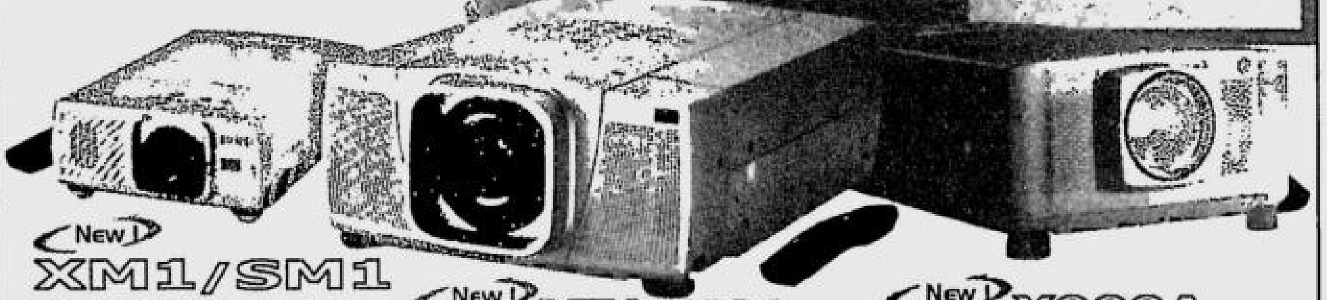

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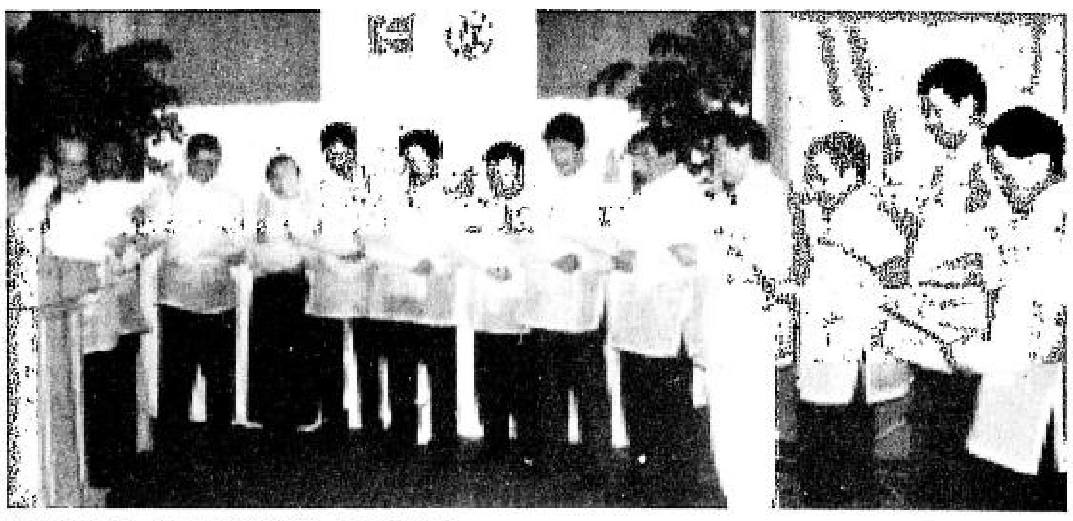
DOTC reveals plans for nationwide airport development

DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) Assistant Secretary for Planning George D. Esguerra recently announced the department's National Airport Development Plan (NADP) which would upgrade, develop and modernize airports all over the country. Speaking at a briefing held recently at Camp Aguinaldo, Esguerra enumerated a list of current and future projects of the development plan to prepare the Philippines for its liberalized air policies. The briefing was held for commercial and defense attaches in anticipation of the forthcoming 7th Aviation, Maritime and Defense Show slated April 5-8 at the Philippine Trade Training Center.

The NADP, Esguerra said, would benefit Mindanao the most. Mindanao would have "the greatest concentration of airport development funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the European Investment Bank (EIB)." A project costing P4.68 billion, for example, would modernize the Davao International Airport and extend its runway another 500 meters. Other projects include a P4.5-billion project to transfer the Cagayan de Oro Airport to Laguindingan and an P8.3-billion project to upgrade the airports in Butuan, Cotabato, Dipolog and Pagadian.

Airports in Visayas and Luzon are likewise included in the NDAP. Tacloban Airport, for instance, will be upgraded and the Bacolod Airport will be relocated to a safer location in Silay. There are also plans to upgrade the Laoag International Airport and the creation of a cargo terminal in Batangas. The DOTC, Esguerra said, also remains committed to the eventual relocation of the NAIA to Clark.

The direction of the plan is to build airports of international standards at different regional centers throughout the country. An important component of the plan is the modernization of air navigational facilities to make air traffic in the Philippines much safer.



CAMERA CLUB 2001 BOARD

Inducting the incoming 2001 board of the Camera Club of the Philippines is lifetime member Dr. Felix B. Perlas (left) and outgoing president Dik Trofeo (second from left). The new board members are (from left) Antonio D. Lilles, president; Felice Sta. Maria, vice president, and directors Norlito S. Quimel, Francisco G. Balagtas, Paul C. Yan, Federico M. Ortiz, Emil V. Davocol, Rodolfo M. de Leon, Albert C. Chiu, Raul B. Tangco and Valentino T. Ley.

'BEYOND' OPENS AT FARMER'S PLAZA

Avid Sales Corporation, a proponent of the digital lifestyle, recently opened "Beyond" at the Farmer's Plaza at Araneta Center in Cubao, Quezon City. Aside from state-of-the-art audio and video products, computers and cellular phones, "Beyond" also features a gaming room and an Internet lounge. Avid Sales Corporation is a chain of 13 stores in Metro Manila and Metro Cebu. Other Avid Sales Corporation outlets are located at Avid Sony Shop (Makati-Pasong Tamo, SM Megamall, SM City-Cebu, Festival Supermall-Alabang, Manila-UN and Makati-Quad); The AV Center (Bacoor, Balintawak, Ali Mall and Alabang Town Center, Cali (Galleria); AiWa Showroom Kalaw and AVSurfer.com, the company's website.

BITS & Clips

Jollibee promo

Fastfood leader Jollibee has come up with an exciting promo that would make customers plan what time they would visit the store: the "Jolly Good Time" promo. The promo enables customers to experience their favorite Jollibee food products at discounted prices during select hours of the day. From 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and an hour before closing time, customers may order a double spaghetti special at P39 or a double french fries with double regular soft drink at P39. The promo runs until April 6 at Jollibee stores nationwide.

PDC seminar on cost of quality

The Productivity and Development Center of the Development Academy of the Philippines (PDC-DAP) will conduct a seminar on Cost of Quality Measurement on April 4 to 5 at the audio-visual room at the sixth floor of the DAP Pasig Conference Center in San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City. Wai Chong Chan, a technical expert, will be the main resource speaker. For more information, contact PDC-DAP at 631-2137 or 631-0921 to 30 loc. 171. Look for Ayin Buensuceso or Norman Nangea.

TOON POWER

Cartoon Network, home of the Powerpuff Girls, Dexter's Laboratory, Johnny Bravo and Cow and Chicken, recently presented their 2001 on- and off-air programs to clients and friends at a party called "Toon Power." The event also featured a special appearance by The Powerpuff Girls and a "Who Wants To Be a Premium-Naire?" contest based on the popular game show of a similar name. Photo shows (from left) Liza Baumgarten, regional sales director, Turner International Asia Pacific; Rowena Alano, marketing manager-consumer incentives, Jollibee Foods Corp.; and Luigi Nunez, executive vice president, Far East Media Consultants, Philippine advertising representatives of Turner International.

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Alabang Country Club "B"	2,100,000	-
Camp John Hay	320,000	400,000
Capitol Hills Golf & CC	130,000	-
Canyon Woods	-	350,000
Celebrity Sports	200,000	210,000
Club Filipino "C"	-	Please Call
Eagleridge "A"	450,000	-
Eagleridge "B"	Please Call	-
Evercrest golf club "A"	110,000	150,000
Fontana "D"	-	90,000
Makati Sports Club, Inc. "A"	-	460,000
Manila Golf (Indv.)	-	14,500,000
Manila Polo	3,500,000	-
Manila Southwoods "A"	-	900,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	950,000	-
Mt. Malarayat "A"	-	Please Call
Mt. Malarayat "Gold B"	450,000	550,000
Phil. Columbian	-	90,000
Pueblo de Oro	-	380,000
Punta Fuego	-	700,000
Quezon City Sports Club	-	225,000
Royale Tagaytay	Please Call	130,000
Sherwoods "B"	-	390,000
Sta. Elena "B"	2,000,000	Please Call
Subic Bay Yacht Club	-	400,000
Tagaytay Country Club	Please Call	495,000
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	-	1,300,000
Tagaytay Midlands	880,000	-
Wack-Wack	9,600,000	Best Bid

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Alabang Country Club	45,000	Riviera	40,000
Forest Hills	20,000	Tagaytay Highlands	60,000
Manila Southwoods	60,000	Tagaytay Midlands	45,000

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Eagle Ridge C	570,000	Capitol Hills	130,000
Eastridge	220,000	Celebrity	200,000
Fontana	Please call	Eagle Ridge A	350,000
Forest Hills A & B	260,000	Evercrest	110,000
Manila Golf (Indv. & Corp.)	Please call	Manila Golf (Indiv.)	13,800,000
Manila Polo	Please call	Manila Polo	3,000,000
Manila Southwoods A	900,000	Manila Southwoods A	850,000
Manila Southwoods B	1,000,000	Manila Southwoods B	950,000
Makati Sports B	450,000	Makati Sports A	400,000
Malarayat, Orchard A, B, C	Please call	Malarayat, Orchard A, B, C	Please call
Quezon City Sports	225,000	Puerto Azul	130,000
Riviera A	250,000	Quezon City Sports	225,000
Sta. Elena A	2,150,000	Sta. Elena A	2,100,000
Sta. Elena B*	2,200,000	Sta. Elena B	2,200,000
Subic	Please call	Tagaytay Highland Club	490,000
Tagaytay Highland Club	490,000	Tagaytay Highland Golf	1,100,000
Tagaytay Highland Golf	1,150,000	Tagaytay Midlands	890,000
Tagaytay Midlands	890,000*	Valle Verde CC	190,000
Valley Golf	350,000	Valley Golf	350,000
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Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,900,000	
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	2,000,000	
Baguio Country Club	800,000	
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	85,000	110,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"		150,000
Camp John Hay	-	375,000
Canlubang	850,000	1,000,000
Canyonwoods	-	350,000
Capitol Hills	125,000	140,000
Cebu Country Club	2,000,000	2,200,000
Celebrity Sports Club	200,000	220,000
Club Filipino	300,000	330,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	-	220,000
Evercrest "A"	110,000	130,000
Forest Hills "A"	240,000	275,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	280,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	450,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	400,000	425,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	500,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	16,000,000	18,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	14,000,000	14,500,000
Manila Polo	3,500,000	3,800,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	850,000	920,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	900,000	1,100,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	200,000
Mimosa Golf & Country Club (Ind./Corp.)	Please Call	Please Call
Montemar (Corp.)		55,000
Montemar (Ind.)		40,000
Mt. Malarayat		400,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	310,000	350,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	-	400,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	550,000	650,000
Philippine Columbian	-	85,000
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	150,000	170,000
Quezon City Sports Club	230,000	250,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Royale Tagaytay "A/B/C"	Please Call	Please Call
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	280,000
Sta. Elena "A"	2,100,000	2,200,000
Sta. Elena "B"	2,200,000	2,600,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corp.)	400,000	550,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Ind.)	-	350,000
Tagaytay Country Club	430,000	490,000
Tagaytay Highlands	1,100,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	880,000	950,000
Valle Verde (Ind)	200,000	220,000
Valley Golf	350,000	-
Wack-Wack Golf Club	9,500,000	10,000,000

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Canlubang	70,000	Riviera "A"	15,000
Eagleridge	30,000	Sta. Elena	70,000
Eastridge "A"	20,000	Tagaytay CC	30,000
Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	65,000
Manila Southwoods	50,000	Tivoli Royale	20,000
Makati Sports "A"	35,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	500,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

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CC @ TAGAYTAY	500,000	ALABANG "B"	2,000,000
CLUB FILIPINO	340,000	BAGUIO CC	810,000
EASTRIDGE	240,000	MANILA GOLF (CORP.)	16,250,000
LUISITA GCC "A"	620,000	MANILA POLO CLUB	3,200,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	400,000	MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	860,000
MANILA GOLF (INDIV.)	15,500,000	METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	150,000
MT. MALARAYAT "A"	500,000	ORCHARD "A"	290,000
MT. MALARAYAT "C"	1,100,000	QUEZON CITY SPORTS "A"	225,000
ORCHARD "B"	600,000	RIVIERA "A"	250,000
ORCHARD "C"	650,000	STA. ELENA "B"	2,200,000
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MANILA GOLF (ASSIGNEE)	500,000/yr	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	40,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	50,000	WACK WACK	100 000

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Baguio CC	Pls. Call	750,000
Capitol Hills	140,000	120,000
Camp John Hay	350,000	Pls. Call
Canyon Woods	400,000	-
Celebrity Sports	Pls. Call	200,000
Eagleridge	Pls. Call	400,000
Evercrest	130,000	110,000
Filipinas Golf	350,000	300,000
Fontana C	160,000	-
Fontana D	90,000	-
Forest Hills A	260,000	Pls. Call
Malarayat	550,000	
Manila Golf	Pls. Call	13,800,000
Manila Polo	-	3,000,000
Manila Southwoods A	Pls. Call	850,000
Manila Southwoods B	Pls. call	900,000
Mimosa A	200,000	-
Mimosa C2	300,000	-
Orchard	350,000	290,000
Riviera	260,000	Pls. Call
Sta.Elena	Pls. call	-
Subic Golf	310,000	-
Subic Yacht Club	450,000	Pls. Call
Tagaytay CC	500,000	Pls. Call
Tagaytay Midlands	900,000	850,000
Tagaytay Highlands	1,200,000	Pls. Call
Tivoli Royale	230,000	-
Valley.golf	Pls. Call	330,000
Valle Verde	200,000	175,000
Wack-wack	Pls. Call	9,000,000

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AS OF MARCH 30, 2001

		ASKED PRICE	BID PRICE
1	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	-	1,800,000.00
2	BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	-	800,000.00
3	CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	110,000.00	-
4	CAPITOL HILLS GOLF CLUB	150,000.00	115,000.00
5	CAMP JOHN HAY GOLF CLUB	500,000.00	-
6	CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	210,000.00	
7	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	[illegible]	-
8	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	-	350,000.00
9	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	450,000.00	
10	MANILA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB (Individual)	16,000,000.00	-
11	MANILA POLO CLUB	3,600,000.00	3,200,000.00
12	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	-	800,000.00
13	METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	-	175,000.00
14	MONTE MAR BEACH CLUB (Individual)	30,000.00	
15	MONTEMAR BEACH CLUB (Corporate)	50,000.00	
16	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	600,000.00	
17	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	660,000.00	-
18	PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB	-	130,000.00
19	PHIL. COLUMBIAN ASSOCIATION	85,000.00	-
20	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	250,000.00	240,000.00
21	STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	-	1,900,000.00
22	SHERWOOD HILLS "B"	380,000.00	
23	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L GOLF CLUB	-	1,100,000.00
24	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS GOLF CLUB	870,000.00	-
25	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB (Individual)	-	175,000.00
26	VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	-	300,000.00
27	WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		8,500,000.00

PLAYING RIGHTS ALSO AVAILABLE
AMELIA B. MAGAT - Asst. Treas / Comptroller
or call ROMEO M. RIBANO
SHIONEL PIGA / REYNALDO CUEVAS
GROUND FLR., TUSCAN BLDG., 114 HERRERA ST.,
LEGASPI VILLAGE, MAKATI CITY.
TELS: 818-6991 • 818-6936 • 818-6948 FAX: 818-5453
E-MAIL: fvdrh@v-link.net

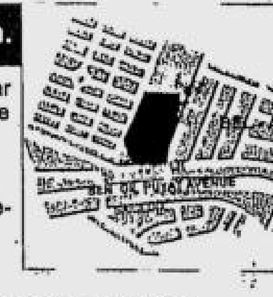
FPDsavills
INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

PROPERTIES FOR SALE OR LONG TERM LEASE

Ayala - Malugay Property 8,056 sq.m.

The land is strategically located within close proximity to Ayala Avenue extension and Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue intersection. Based on preliminary studies, we believe the site to be ideally suitable for:
Business hotel and serviced apartments
Residential condominium
Office - Grade 'B'
Improvements on the property include five semi-concrete buildings with a gross floor area of 4,182 sq.m. No current height restrictions applicable.

Sen. Gil Puyat - Jupiter Exchange 35,037 sq.m.



The property comprises a large site of about 3.5 hectares well located near the financial, residential and entertainment districts of Makati. We believe the site is ideally suitable for:
Retail establishments
Office - Grade 'B'
Improvements on the property include a 2-level semi-concrete office-warehouse/shop bordered by a concrete fence.
With current Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 5

For more information, please contact the sole agents:

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Stock trading seen within narrow range

By Doris C. Dumlao

AFTER a short-lived rally last week, local stocks are seen to consolidate this week as the market continues to thirst for a convincing bottoming out.

MARKET PLAY

"Though most technical indicators show oversold issues, reversal patterns are yet to be seen to indicate any upward tendency within this week's trading. Index is expected to test the 1,400 level within the next few weeks, of which breaching will confirm continued bearish sentiments," PCCI Securities head of research Gonzalo Bongolan said.

The main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index bounced 1.04 percent last week to close at 1,446.40 as bargain-hunters snapped up oversold blue-chips such as Ayala Land Inc. and Meralco "B" early during the week. Window-dressing activities to close the disappointing first quarter corporate earnings results likewise spurred some buying interest. Spillover jitters from the US markets, however, still prevailed to weigh down on investor appetite during the latter part of the week.

Keppel Securities head of research Chris Canilanza agreed that local shares would trade within a narrow range this week as investors would likely choose to stay liquid ahead of the long Lenten holiday. He also said local stocks would still be vulnerable to movements in the US markets as well as concerns over the nearing May elections.

"We don't see any substantial gain this week, although the index is currently at oversold territory. Otherwise, any rebound this week would be momentary as the bottom in the US markets remains to be seen. Trading on selective oversold blue chips should be done with caution," Canilanza said.

Canilanza said the Phisix was expected to trade between 1,420 to 1,460.

First Orient Securities head of research Rolando Pineda, on the other hand, said there was a possibility that the index would be buoyed by some follow-through buying this week.

"There might still be some foreign buying. This is good for

STOCK/ B10

GOLFERS CLUB SHARES, INC.
SEC LICENSE # A 1998-2129
AS OF MARCH 30, 2001

		SELLING	BUYING
1.	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"		1,800,000
2.	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"		1,900,000
3	BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	850,000	750,000
4	CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	150,000	100,000
5	CAMP JOHN HAY	400,000	320,000
6	CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		850,000
7	CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	130,000	120,000
8	CELEBRITY CLUB	210,000	200,000
9	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	400,000	
10.	CLUB FILIPINO	330,000	300,000
11	EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	250,000	220,000
12	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"		400,000
13	EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	130,000	100,000
14	FAIRWAYS & BLUEWATER	Pls Call	Pls Call
15	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	300,000	260,000
16	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	550,000	450,000
17	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600,000	
18	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	450,000	400,000
19	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	500,000	400,000
20	MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND)	15,500,000	
21	MANILA POLO CLUB		3,500,000
22	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	850,000	
23	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	1,000,000	900,000
24	MANILA YACHT CLUB	650,000	
25	METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	180,000	
26	METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	200,000	
27	MT MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND)	500,000	400,000
28	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	Pls Call	280,000
29	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	Pls Call	400,000
30	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	Pls. Call	500,000
31	PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB "B"		130,000
32	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	250,000	
33.	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	290,000	
34.	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	500,000	500,000
35	ROYAL NORTHWOODS	Pls Call	Pls Call
36.	STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	2,200,000	1,900,000
37	SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	600,000	
38.	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L. GOLF CLUB		1,100,000
39	TAGAYTAY MIDLAND	900,000	
40	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB		175,000
41.	VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	350,000	
42.	WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	9,500,000	8,500,000

ASSIGNMENT OF PLAYING RIGHTS PLS. CALL

JUST S. VIRAY
TRADING MANAGER
LALA SALAO / LYDIA HASEGAWA / FINAS VIRAY
TEL. NOS. 8175655 / 8121066 / 8193560
7517982 PB#150 – 856000

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Friday, March 30, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	69.5	69.5	69	69.5	232,300
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	16	16	16	16	300
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	50.5	50.5	50.5	50.5	14,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	225	225	224	225	67,840
Philippine National Bank	48	48	47.5	47.5	29,500
Phil. Savings Bank	29.5	30	29.5	29.5	20,800
Rizal Comm'l Bkg Corp A	20	20	20	20	1,000
Security Bank Corp.	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	92,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.42	1.46	1.42	1.46	85,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1175	1180	1175	1180	5,710
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	820	840	820	840	4,550
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	42	42	42	42	22,400
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.52	0.54	0.52	0.54	1,320,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	660	660	660	660	300
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	200,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	705	710	695	695	60,800
Ivantage Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.94	0.95	90,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.048	76,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	44.5	44.5	44	44	58,200
Manila Electric Co. B	56	56	51.5	52.5	447,300
Petron Corp.	1.64	1.66	1.64	1.64	754,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	10,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	225,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.1	1.12	1.04	1.08	4,258,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.37	0.41	0.36	0.36	60,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Cement Corp.	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.4	200,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	660,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12	12	12	12	182,600
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	34	34	32.5	33	209,000
Pancake House Inc.	1.56	1.7	1.56	1.7	140,000
RFM Corp.	1.12	1.16	1.12	1.16	719,000
San Miguel Corp. A	47.5	47.5	47.5	47.5	80,100
San Miguel Corp. B	54	55	53	53	47,000
Universal Robina Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	208,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	300,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	20,000
Ayala Corp.	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.4	715,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	27,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.25	2,600
A. Soriano Corp.	0.23	0.25	0.22	0.25	180,000
APC Group Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	80,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	20,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	13	13	13	13	3,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.46	2.5	2.44	2.44	6,825,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	50,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	40,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.02	960,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	2	2	2	2	1,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	21.25	21.25	20.5	20.5	146,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	370,000
Ipeople Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	60,000
Ipeople Inc. B	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	50,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.16	2.18	2.16	2.18	510,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	5,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.72	0.72	180,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.49	810,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.49	180,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	250,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.28	0.25	0.28	250,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION &TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	88,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.74	0.75	0.74	0.74	140,000
Music Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	471,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	20,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	3,500,000
Prime Gaming Mgmt. Corp.	20	20	20	20	11,316,000
Philtread Tire & Rubber A	4	4	4	4	10,000
Philtread Tire & Rubber B	4	4	4	4	5,000
SPI Technologies Inc	10.75	11.25	10.75	11.25	126,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	2,030,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.58	0.6	0.56	0.56	2,040,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.52	0.6	0.52	0.52	170,000
Manila Jockey Club	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.5	4,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	50,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	42	42.5	42	42	376,100
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	139,000
Jollibee Warrants	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	7,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	36,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	7,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
Waterfront Phils-Warrant	0.045	0.045	0.043	0.043	400,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	310	310	310	310	10
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2	1,824,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	1,000,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	50,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	620,000
Filinvest Land, Inc.	1.96	2	1.9	1.94	12,170,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	300,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.055	0.06	0.055	0.06	4,100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.4	2,596,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.115	0.12	0.09	0.09	3,200,000
MINING					
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	500,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	150,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	500,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	114,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	35,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	10,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.022	0.02	0.021	3,200,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	6,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	220,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	13,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,220,540	109,408,565.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	158,722,890	269,508,845.00
PRO	24,920,000	57,884,760.00
Mining	57,630,000	364,600.00
OIL	44,780,000	444,800.00
GRAND TOTALS	287,273,430	437,611,570.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	601.09	UP 1.40
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,961.29	UP 17.97
PRO	534.04	UP 10.81
Mining	1,132.65	UP 1.20
OIL	1.63	DOWN 0.02
All Shares Index	716.70	UP 6.08
Composite	1,446.40	UP 16.24

NO. OF ADVANCES: 47; NO. OF DECLINES: 27; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 38;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 112; NO. OF TRADES: 2,062

CURRENCIES

Mar. 30, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.464129	1.000000	49.3780
Japan	Yen	0.011837	0.008085	0.3992
United Kingdom	Pound	2.089751	1.427300	70.4772
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.187713	0.128208	6.3307
Switzerland	Franc	0.847444	0.578804	28.5802
Canada	Dollar	0.931616	0.636294	31.4189
Singapore	Dollar	0.813179	0.555401	27.4246
Australia	Dollar	0.720075	0.491811	24.2846
Bahrain	Dinar	3.883837	2.652661	130.9831
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.390413	0.266652	13.1667
Brunei	Dollar	0.813631	0.555710	27.4398
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000141	0.000096	0.0047
Thailand	Baht	0.032754	0.022371	1.1046
UAE	Dirham	0.398673	0.272294	13.4453
Korea	Won	0.001108	0.000757	0.0374
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.683000	33.7252
Germany	Mark	0.661012	0.451471	22.2927
France	Franc	0.152450	0.134612	6.6469
Netherlands	Guilder	0.586659	0.400688	19.7852
Austria	Schilling	0.093953	0.064170	3.1686
Belgium	Franc	0.032048	0.021889	1.0808
Italy	Lire	0.000668	0.000456	0.0225
Finland	Markka	0.217438	0.148510	7.3331
Portugal	Escudo	0.006448	0.004404	0.2175
Spain	Peseta	0.007770	0.005307	0.2620
Luxemburg	Franc	0.032048	0.021889	1.0808
Ireland	Punt	1.641551	1.121179	55.3616

A brief flicker of light

ON THE MONEY

John Mangun

I SAW an airplane crash once. I was waiting for a flight at John Wayne Airport near Los Angeles, when a small private plane flew in front of a commercial 737 making a landing. All the clichés are true. Time slows down. You stop breathing. You can't move. That is the way it has been watching this stock market for the past two weeks. I haven't even talked to Franky for more than a week. He has probably been in a cave at Mt. Makiling practicing his Kama Sutra exercises. Nobody wants to make a call on this market right now because it seems to be teetering on the edge.

I can say that the longer it holds at these levels without dropping, it is coming closer to fulfilling one of the scenarios promoted a month ago that the market would be listless for a while as it builds a base from which to rally. This is a case where no bad news is good news. However, I still think there is some more downside potential so carefully watch the developments. I sent out a couple of charts to members of "THE LIST." If you are interested, send me an email at my address below.

I do, however, see some signs that things are picking up on a few fronts. I would not call it the light at the end of the tunnel. At this point, it is a small candle flickering in the wind.

Finally, we are starting to see some economic proposals from the administration instead of more politics. You probably never thought you would hear me say that. The idea that the government would change the Bureau of Internal Revenue into an independent agency is intriguing. I am not sure if this has even been done before. It may never happen but this is the kind of talk that is appealing to investors both foreign and domestic. It shows that someone is thinking about the future. Tax collection is a major problem here and anything that would increase revenues would be most helpful. People are going to have to expect even less from government or to start paying for it. Actually, I think the most practical solution would be more indirect taxation. I hope the next financial proposal includes some drastic and specific action to curb waste and inefficiency. Those two items are just as critical as corruption and graft. At least this BIR idea is a step in the right direction toward something innovative and practical.

Maybe there will be more talk like this in the weeks to come. It would be most positive for the market.

Friday's INQUIRER business section had two conflicting stories. Finance Secretary Romulo talks about the revenue losses from tax incentives to foreign direct investors and Trade Secretary Roxas says we lost a big investment to Vietnam because we could not offer the same lengthy tax holiday that they did. Gentlemen, you cannot have it both ways. If we could do away with some of the conventional wisdom, why not offer big incentives to (I know this is going to be radical) LOCAL companies that form FINANCIAL joint ventures with foreign interests. This idea of matching incentive for incentive is silly. We offer 10 years of no tax; Vietnam offers 12. Logically this could go to an extreme where the foreigners never pay any tax and maybe we could even subsidize them directly to invest. Why not draw a sensible line and stick to it.

The US economy may weather the Greenspan storm without too much damage. Bush's major tax cut looks like it is going to pass the Congress. Already, in anticipation, consumer confidence is starting to turn up in the US. Also, and this is important, the dollar remains strong. That fact rebuts my argument earlier that the peso would strengthen. Sorry, but we are going to have to live with a near P50 for the time being. The good news of local interest rate on the 182 treasury bill falling is a further positive sign. We just have to wait for its effect to plug into the economy.

There will be some great opportunities in the near future to get in to this stock market. So many shares are undervalued in relation to earnings, earnings growth, and hard corporate value. For example, one property stock is trading below 50 centavos and has a book value of P1.50. Another firm is trading at three time EPS based on year 2000 actual profits. One particular large company saw income up 30 percent for year 2000 and yet the stock is down 75 percent from Jan. 1st of last year. These circumstances cannot continue forever.

Is it the time to buy now? I get that question most often. My answer is still probably not. Yes, you can always buy for the long term if you are willing to see some depreciation while holding. However, I personally, would not necessarily buy the big blue chip stocks for that longer term. The next few weeks are going to see corporate annual shareholders meetings. I am going to be looking at their optimism and spending plans to figure out which companies will outperform the market and economy.

This you can quote me on. No matter from what level we finally bottom out, be it 1,400, 1,200 or even 900, we are going to witness a long-term rally. Price performance will rival what we saw from 1991 to 1994.

And the people on that plane I mentioned earlier were fortunate. No one was killed.

(John Mangun can be reached at 636-1121 to 35, Fax No. 634-2349 or e-mail at johnmangun-@yahoo.com.)

Cocktales . . .

(From page B3)

Lobregat ownership/stewardship claims over the sequestered bank.

But Cocobank is not San Miguel and since the Cojuangco/Estrada nominees haye now clothed themselves with due process and legal technicalities—strange for a gang that browbeat their way into power only three years ago—to perpetuate their hold on the country's prized trophy, the Macapagal-Arroyo administration has to seek not only the removal of the Estrada nominees but also the final solution to the San Miguel problem with the Supreme Court.

After the Supreme Court rules that the coco levy funds in San Miguel are indeed public funds—according to the Marcelo theory, the high court cannot rule otherwise given the wordings and the penalty clause in the Marcos decree that imposed the levy—the government will most likely auction off the shares, representing 27 percent of San Miguel.

After all, there is a worrying budget hole that it has to plug; moreover, there is also a growing consensus among the Macapagal-Arroyo advisers that the government's presence in San Miguel has been a drag, weighing down the country's largest food and beverage complex all these years.

In that scenario, Cojuangco, assuming that he also wins ownership of the 20 percent he now controls, will be free to bid for the coco levy shares or join the government and sell as one bloc to fetch a higher price.

In the meantime, since the Erap appointees still refuse to relinquish their board seats despite the soft approach of the Macapagal-Arroyo government, the Bureau of Internal Revenue may have to enter the picture and unleash its investigative dogs on the Erap gang.

After all, force is the only language that they and their idol, Asiong Salonga, respects.

Summer job

ABOUT 30 law students of UP and Ateneo will spend this summer in the dusty vaults of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

The students will attempt to finish the inventory and cataloguing of truckloads of documents related to the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses and their cronies that have been in the safekeeping of the central bank since 1986.

A project of newly installed Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo, Project Noah, as it is called, is the first comprehensive attempt by the government to put order in the documentation needed if the new administration wants to win the cases against the well-oiled legal and lobby machinery of the usual suspects.

First-class downgrade

DUE to the relatively small market, Japan Air Lines, like Northwest, uses a smaller plane for its Manila-Tokyo route, offering only business and economy class services.

Thus, holders of first-class tickets from Manila, or from Tokyo to Manila, are forced to take business class, with the VIP passengers only getting upgraded to their assigned section from Tokyo and onwards destinations.

Currently, only JAL offers first-class seats that transform themselves into full-beds for its trans-Pacific route. Thus, frequent New York travelers do not mind paying the $5,000-round trip fare, twice that of the business-class fare, for the privilege of sleeping horizontally throughout the 14-hour Tokyo-New York haul.

During the peak months when JAL overbooks its Tokyo-Manila leg, the Japanese airline uses a bigger jet, complete with the first class section, to fly onwards to Manila. With the bigger plane, the first-class ticket holders should also be flying first class for the Manila-Tokyo or Tokyo-Manila leg, right?

Nope. Per experience of socialite Menchu Katigbak, a frequent New York traveler, first-class fare still means business class seating for the regional leg, despite the larger plane. And the irony is, only the last-minute bookings made by Tokyo travel agents for their Japanese clients get to avail of the first-class upgrade.

If it is any consolation, taipan George Ty, who controls the local Thomas Cook, Katigbak's travel agent, gets the same short shrift from JAL.

Heard through the grapevine

AN upcoming book on Edsa II will detail the shady financial transactions of an Erap banker (no, not George Go) who has, up to now, successfully insulated himself as part of the Midnight Cabinet.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Gov't to seek ouster of 5 Erap nominees in SMC

By Clarissa S. Batino

GOVERNMENT lawyers will petition the Supreme Court this week to oust five Estrada nominees in San Miguel Corp. and to lift the Jan. 20 deadline imposed by the company's by-laws restraining the government from nominating new directors in the beer-based giant.

Presidential Legal Adviser Avelino Cruz said the Presidential Commission on Good Government and the Office of the Solicitor General will file the petition for the ouster and the extension of the Jan. 20 deadline.

"President Arroyo only took her oath on Jan. 20 and I think it is legally unreasonable to impose the deadline," said Cruz in a phone interview.

At the same time, Cruz said pension funds Government Service and Insurance System and Social Security System would file proxy statements with the Securities and Exchange Commission to solicit voting rights from its members and get majority control of San Miguel.

The government still needs about 150 million shares so it could have eight of the 15 SMC board seats. With a majority, the government could take control from San Miguel chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

Cruz said the PCGG's 27 percent would give it five board seats while SSS and GSIS have a seat each.

"We would ask these from the Supreme Court so that our nominees would be included in the candidates for directors at the May 3 stockholders' meeting of San Miguel," Cruz said.

Ousted President Estrada had appointed, through the PCGG, five representatives to San Miguel board including his brother-in-law Raul de Guzman, movie producer Espiridion Laxa, Alan Lee, Ben Paulino and Dr. Hermogenes Tantoco.

Cruz said the PCGG had written the five repeatedly, asking them to resign but the Erap appointees said their term would end on May 3.

Before Estrada, the PCGG would require these nominees to sign a trust document, which expressly states that they would abide with any decision of their principal. During the time of Estrada, this document was not executed, the presidential legal adviser said.

"But they have to abide by the decision of their principal, in this case the PCGG and the PCGG is telling them to resign," Cruz said.

The new administration would nominate to the SMC board Renato Valencia, former president of the Social Security System; banker Octavio V. Espiritu; former Presidential Security Group chief Maj. Gen. Leo Alvez; former Court of Appeals Justice Hector Hofillena; and Bacolod businessman Francis Fuentebella.

Cruz explained that the Jan. 20 deadline specified in the by-laws of San Miguel was provided during the time of former SMC chair Andres Soriano III to give the bank enough time to evaluate candidates and guard against competitive interests.

"They could already check the background of our nominees and nobody could be holding a competitive interest," he said.

Cojuangco regained chairmanship of San Miguel a few days after ousted President Estrada came into power in July 1998. Cojuangco was one of the biggest campaign contributors to the presidential bid of Estrada.

This series on Philippine Banking history is published in the business section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer in commemoration of the 150th year of the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), formerly *El Banco Español Filipino de Isabel 2* (The Spanish Filipino Bank of Isabel II), the first bank to be established in the Philippines and Southeast Asia.

PHILIPPINE BANKING

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...that after the declaration of Philippine independence in Kawit, Cavite on June 12, 1898, Emilio Aguinaldo, the first president of the Philippine Republic, adopted a new currency for the new government?

...that one-peso and five-peso notes were printed as *Republica Filipina Papel Moneda de un Peso* and *Cinco Pesos*, respectively?

..that with the printing of the new bank notes came the minting of three variations of a *dos centimos de peso* copper coin by the Aguinaldo administration?

.that the new Philippine currency ceased to be used after the capture of Aguinaldo by the American forces in Palanan, Isabela?

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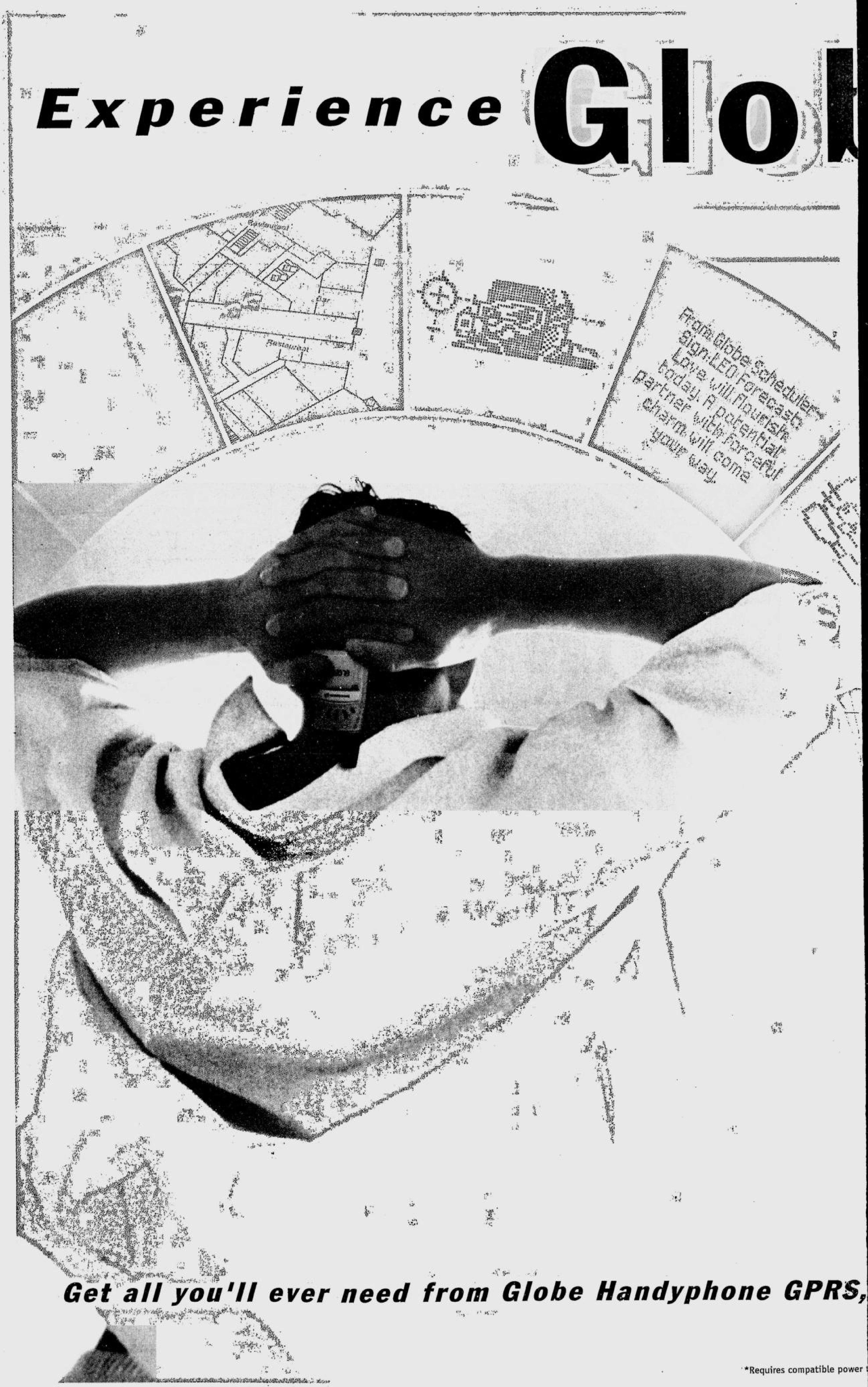
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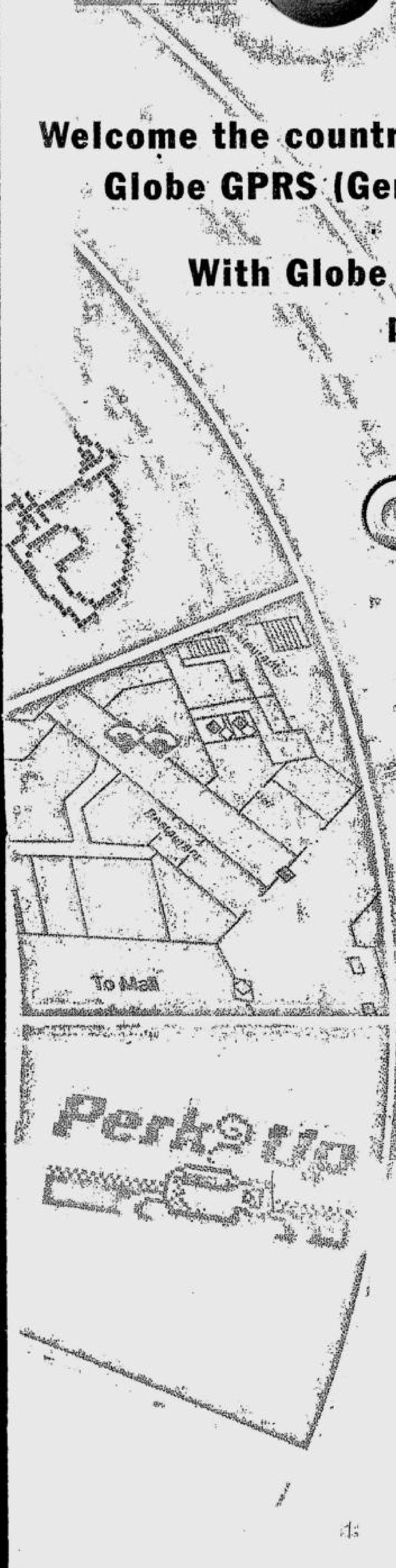

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Gov't seen to revise vehicle program to meet WTO rules

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BOARD of Investments is tinkering anew with the Motor Vehicle Development Program, the government's blueprint to push forward the automotive industry, to make it compliant with World Trade Organization rules.

This is in line with the imminent lifting of all Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMS) such as the local content and net foreign exchange earnings requirements.

The Philippine government should have abolished all protective barriers on its automotive industry last year. However, it appealed with the US government, which has been adamant in its demand for Malacañang to comply with the schedule, for an extension of Trims by three to five years.

The Philippines, in justifying its appeal, said it needed more time to protect its automotive industry to make it stronger and more competitive. The US has threatened to file a case with the WTO against the Philippines for violating the trade agreement.

The BOI has received offers from various foreign consultants to assist the agency in its ongoing MVDP review. One of these foreign advisers is White & Castle Inc., which has been supporting the Philippine mission to Geneva in defending the country's position to extend the TRIMS.

The company claimed it had successfully assisted Singapore and Malaysia in defending investment programs against allegations by the US that they offered discriminatory subsidies.

The company said the Macedonian National Car Program (which it helped to reformat) was similar to the MVDP as both offered tax and duty preferences to automakers that met certain requirements.

US companies, particularly its automotive giants, have been lobbying for the lifting of all TRIMS in order to widen their access to developing countries such as the Philippines.

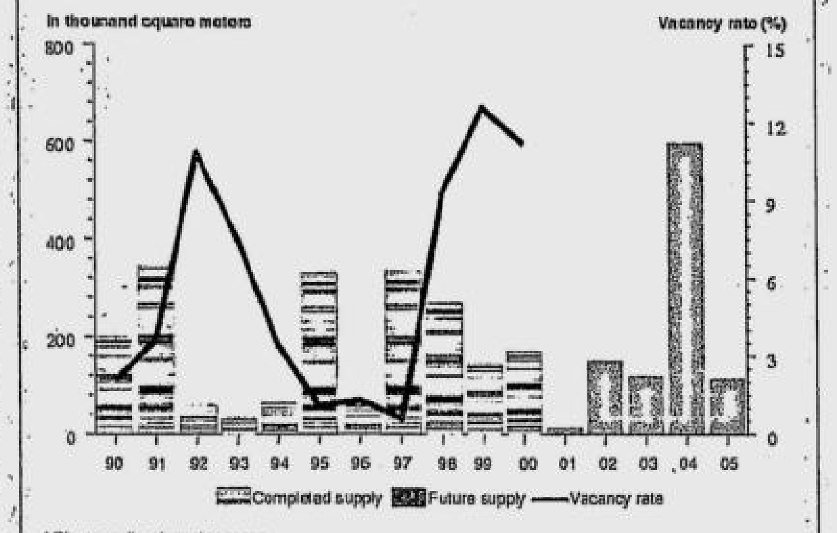
Aside from the Philippines, the US has threatened to sue five other countries to force them to junk their TRIMS—Brazil (for textile products and lack of patent protection), Romania (discriminatory pricing on clothing, poultry and distilled spirits), India (for autos), Argentina (for patent protection), and Denmark (weak enforcement of patent and copyright laws).

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Supply and vacancy of retail centers*

(1990 to December 2000)



* Figures reflect leasable areas

Source: Jones Lang LaSalle

The Power Plant at Rockwell Center and the Shaw MRT-Station which opened in the second half of last year, pushed the total stock of retail space to 2.7 million square meters. The two contributed additional 52,400 square meters in retail space. Leasing transactions in the fourth quarter were mostly for food and beverage outlets. The vacancy rate as of December fell to 11.2 percent from 13 percent in June.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

UK retailers go to Asia for overseas expansion

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

SINGAPORE—Hypermart operator Tesco Plc of the United Kingdom said the Philippines remained a potential investment site for its expansion in Asia.

However, Tesco deputy chair David Reid said the Philippines was not on the British company's current priority list as it decided to initially focus on Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia and Japan.

This, he said, was because the country's growth potential and macroeconomic figures—the factors that affect the consumers' purchasing power—were not as good as the countries in its priority list.

"We want to build Tesco to be a leading player in these markets in Asia. It does not make sense for us if we'll put up just one or two stores," Reid said.

But Reid said the Philippines remained in the company's "radar screen" because of its huge market. He said the company has been continuing its studies on the potential of the Philippines.

Tesco is the biggest retailer in the UK and one of the biggest in Europe. It was one of the first to put up superstores.

Reid explained Tesco's expansion strategy to enter the international markets during the Singapore Retail Industry Conference and Retail Industry Trade Event 2001 exhibition held at the Suntec Center.

Tesco expanded into Asia in 1999 with 19 stores in the three Asian markets. The network increased to 32 last year. The number is expected to increase further to 61 by end-2001.

Reid said Tesco was aggressively looking for new markets in Asia. Tesco also has operations in Central Europe such as in Hungary and Poland. It recently put up its first hypermart in Ireland.

"We have to go international to access growth, gain scale benefits and to compete against emerging global retail players," Reid said.

Megaworld expects 10% rise in profit

By Doris C. Dumlao

PREMIER property developer Megaworld Corp. expects earnings from its Eastwood City Cyberpark to boost its profits by P200 to P300 million this year.

In an interview, Megaworld chair and CEO Andrew Tan said the company was expecting a 10-percent rise in its net income this year from a little less than P600 million last year.

The income from its cyberpark, Tan said, would account for a hefty 40 percent of the total profits targeted by the company for this year.

"That one is doing quite alright. All the space in our IT park was taken up by IT locators. That is one sector we are very bullish. That one is exceptional," Tan said.

Tan noted that the cyberpark was the sector that beefed up the company's earnings even as the property sector in general remained in the doldrums.

Since it started operations in the last quarter of 1999, Megaworld Cyberpark has attracted a number of IT-based investors which have either located or are preparing to locate in the Citibank Square and the IBM Plaza. More office projects are being put up in the cyberpark.

"This year, we should do 10 percent more than what we achieved last year. IT will contribute at least 40 percent which is significant considering that three to four years ago, there was no contribution," Tan said.

Brokers told to meet deadline or lose license

By Elena R. Torrijos

STOCKBROKERS must comply with the registration requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission by mid-April or risk nonrenewal of their license, SEC Chair Lilia Bautista has warned.

In an interview, Bautista disclosed that the SEC cleared the extension of the provisional license granted to the Philippine Stock Exchange's member brokers to April 15 from March 31.

Bautista said the commission approved the extension after PSE president Ramon Garcia reported that half of the stock exchange's member brokers had yet to comply with requirements like the submission of a letter giving the SEC authority to look into their bank accounts.

The SEC chief said the commission would not extend the deadline after April 15 because it should be easy enough for brokers to come up with documentary requirements.

"They can do it in a few days," she said.

Asked what would happen to stockbrokerages that would fail to meet the April deadline, Bautista replied, "Then they don't have a license."

Some brokers have protested the need to give the SEC authority to look into their bank accounts in relation to investigations.

An SEC official said the PSE demanded that the director of the SEC's market regulation department and at least one commissioner approve any examination of a broker's bank accounts.

The SEC has not yet made any decision on the matter.

PHILIP MORRIS EXECS' VISIT

Philip Morris executives recently met with President Macapagal-Arroyo to discuss the company's projects in the Philippines. The delegation includes (from left) Philip Morris Philippines managing director George Farah, and Philip Morris Asia vice president-corporate affairs Ellis Woodward and president Duck Y. Song.

PNB sale unlikely this month

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has clarified that the sale of the government's and taipan Lucio Tan's combined 83-percent stake in the Philippine National Bank will be held in June, not April as earlier announced.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo told reporters a sale this month was unlikely because US auditing giant PricewaterhouseCoopers had yet to finish its third-party examination of PNB's financial health.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said earlier the sale of the government's and Tan's stake in PNB would push through this month. Romulo said Buenaventura's information was possibly fed by the bank's management.

A senior finance official said Buenaventura could have mixed up his dates because PwC had been given until April 16 to finish its job. The auditing firm's report is needed before the government and Tan can sign a joint-sale agreement.

"By May, we would invite investment banks to help us in crafting the joint sale while a tentative schedule for the bundled sale would be in June," one DOF official said.

Tan earlier agreed to sell his stake in PNB with shares held by the government but insisted that the price should be no less than P160 a share, the price at which he bought his shares in 1999.

Bank analysts believe a joint sale of the government's and Tan's stake in PNB may again lead to a failed bidding, citing price differences.

The government's and Tan's shares were placed on the auction bloc in June last year, but no bidder showed up because the price was too steep. Tan wanted to sell his stake at P160 a share, but was later prevailed upon to bring down his asking price to P140. Still, no bidder showed up.

Romulo and Buenaventura said Tan should sell this time at a more realistic price.

"The due diligence would allow us to come up with a plan for the bank, including a rehabilitation plan," Romulo said.

A rehabilitation plan already approved by the central bank was put on hold following the ouster of former President Joseph Estrada, who approved the plan.

The government has a 16-percent stake in PNB while Tan holds 67 percent. Their combined stake is currently valued at P17.4 billion, or P47 a share.

Stock trading . . .

(From page B6)

the market in terms of upward movement. There are also some positive signs as we draw near the May elections," Pineda said.

Pineda said recent surveys indicated that newly installed President Macapagal-Arroyo was still likely to get sufficient support in the Senate while ousted President Estrada's senatorial bets were faring poorly. At the same time, he noted that Macapagal's rising popularity rating was indicative of improving confidence.

BPI Securities analyst Spencer Yap said that the market remained at a crossroad with the composite index settling just below the initial 1,450 technical resistance.

"The market's position remains precarious. In the past, rallies have not been sustained given the persistent foreign selling pressure. The market is searching for bottom after having broken the 1,450 support. There may be signs that foreign selling has begun to taper off. Selected index issues have again benefited from some buying support after share prices have declined by 10 to 20 percent," Yap said.

"How the market moves next week should determine its direction for the near-term. Obviously, we hope to see a convincing break toward 1,500," Yap said.

BPI Securities technical analyst Roberto Cano said that if the technical support at 1,426 holds, the market might test the next resistance at 1,450 to 1,500.

"Technical indicators have been hinting of some consolidation. The daily RSI (relative strength index) indicates that the market is oversold and has shown a divergence. The daily MACD (moving average convergence-divergence) is also hinting that a reversal is likely. The MACD also hinted of a bullish divergence. If the Phisix breaks 1,450 and sustains the breakout, we suggest slow accumulation. However, watch out for the psychological and immediate trendline resistance near the 1500 range," Cano said.

Meanwhile, sentiment in the local stock market this week can also be boosted by the modest gains in the US markets on Friday. Both the Dow and the tech-heavy Nasdaq rose by 79.92 points and 19.69 points, respectively, and thus closed the books on one ugly first quarter.

GOINGS-ON

Corn feedstock centers

SIX Corn Feedstock Service Centers worth P84 million will be established by the National Agribusiness Development Center (NADC) Foundation Inc. in Central Mindanao through its Region 10 arm, the Cagayan de Oro Agribusiness Center Inc. (CACI).

Some 6,800 farmers working on 7,300 hectares in the region are expected to benefit from this investment.

NADC, an organization supported by the Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC), will expand corn production, processing, marketing and working capital of existing corn service centers in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, Malaybalay City, Cabanglasan and Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon.

Scalability roadshow

At the upcoming Scalability Roadshow Asia 2001, Unisys Philippines, with partners Microsoft and Intel, will showcase the new wave of enterprise computing.

The event, to be held on April 2,2001 at the Manila Peninsula Hotel, will feature the latest developments in the innovative Unsiys e-@ction Enterprise Server ES7000, the highly scalable Intel Architecture (IO and Microsoft Windows 2000 technology.

Unisys director for horizontal solutions Joey Pengson will discuss the groundbreaking performance of the Unisys ES7000 in providing a powerful platform that capitalizes on the full scalability of Windows 2000 Datacenter Server for large-scale e-business solutions.

$100M for export financing

EXPORT and Industry Bank (ExportBank) has earmarked more than $100 million for export financing this year.

Of the amount, 50 percent was allocated to large accounts or businesses with total assets of over P60 million while the rest was set aside for small and medium exporters.

The bank has identified the following industries for financing: garments, furniture, chemicals/coconut products, fashion accessories, processed food, electronics, fresh food, house wares and decors, metal manufactures, and machinery.

Trading to remain weak

(From page B1)

appetite. There are no signals for investors to buy back into the market," said All-Asia analyst Helen Alvarez.

"This is just about the trend we will be seeing for the coming weeks," Alvarez said.

"The same concerns hound the market . . . prospects for the domestic economy and prospects for global markets. The turmoil that we see in global markets is affecting the market," said Vanessa Lim, fund manager of UCPB Trust.

"We see range trading (in the local market) in the coming days with next support at 1,370 and resistance at 1,450. This is a sign of lack of interest in the market. Even the main cap issues are behaving this way," Lim said.

Reuters

Agri officials seen intervening to lift plummeting copra prices

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture and the Philippine Coconut Authority are planning to intercede to help small coconut farmers market their produce directly to oil mills.

Acting PCA administrator Rodolfo Vargas said in an interview that such an intervention should help coconut farmers get a better deal and lessen their dependence on middlemen.

He said the agriculture department and PCA would coordinate with farmers cooperatives that would buy and sell copra produced by their members to oil mills.

The government would give these cooperatives access to credit from state-owned financial institutions, he said.

Vargas disclosed that Land Bank of the Philippines, Development Bank of the Philippines and United Coconut Planters Bank-Coconut Industry Investment Fund had already committed some P1.23 billion for this project.

"We will also assist cooperatives in establishing their contacts and links with oil mills. The scheme will reduce the 30- to 35-percent price gap between farm-gate and mill-gate prices. The price difference of not less than P2 per kilo will, in the process, go to the earnings of farmers cooperatives and the farmers themselves," Vargas told the INQUIRER.

Small coconut farmers, mostly from Quezon Province, Marinduque,

MONTEMAYOR

Camarines, Albay and Masbate, have been picketing the PCA office in Quezon City since Monday last week to seek government intervention so they can negotiate higher prices for their copra.

Vargas said the government offered to help these farmers by tapping their cooperatives and opening lending opportunities to them.

"This is just part of the programs formulated by the PCA in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture in order to assist copra farmers now that business is not doing well," he said.

Current farm prices of copra since the start of the year have hovered between P4 and P5 a kilo, below farm production costs of P5 to P6 a kilo. In some places, the price had fallen to as low as P2 a kilo.

Copra prices started plummeting to P4 to P5 a kilo in the third quarter of last year from an average price of P6 to P8 a kilo in 1999 due to dwindling demand for coconut oil in the world market.

The PCA expects export prices of coconut oil to remain soft this year due to a vegetable oil supply glut. Coconut oil is the country's biggest farm export product.

Copra prices are expected to fall to $289.50 per metric ton this year, below their historic average of $300 per metric ton. Last year, copra prices rose to as high as $446 per metric ton.

Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said the government would finance a food aid program for coconut farmers, which would mean access to cheaper rice and other food products.

He said the agriculture department would release around P90 million for this program that should help a million farmers.

The government earlier abandoned plans to subsidize local copra producers through a coconut oil-diesel fuel substitute program.

Montemayor said the government decided to shelve this program as this would entail an additional cost of around P1 billion.

Agriculture officials earlier proposed that excess coconut oil equivalent to about 10,000 metric tons could be used as substitute for bunker fuel oil that the National Power Corp. uses to run its power plants.

"However, we could no longer pursue this because it is very costly and we would have to have not less than P1 billion because the additional costs to be incurred by the government is more expensive than imported bunker fuel oil by P2 per liter," Montemayor explained.

Xerox to move headquarters

STAMFORD, Connecticut—Xerox is considering moving out of its current headquarters to either a smaller site in Stamford or another Fairfield County town.

The company, which has been taking actions to deal with financial losses, sluggish sales and a precipitous drop in its stock price, will make the move by the end of the year.

"We are changing our mix of business, our offerings, the way we go to market, our culture and our cost base. It's time we had a new home for a new Xerox," Anne Mulcahy, Xerox president and chief operating officer, said.

The copier company employs 350 people at its headquarters. The building, which was completed late in 1978, can hold 630 people and has a 630-car parking garage.

Xerox owns the land and leases the building in a long-term sale-leaseback agreement. The company plans to divest its interest in the site and expects a deal with an interested company to happen soon.

The headquarters move will not affect the Xerox Engineering Systems facility at Riverbend Center in another of Stamford, according to Xerox spokeswoman Kara Choquette. Xerox put that division up for sale earlier this year.

Over the past year, Xerox has been selling or consolidating various real estate holdings around the world as part of its goal to cut $1 billion in costs.

The company laid off 2,000 workers last year and said it would lay off another 4,000 in the first quarter of this year. *AP*

Microsoft says Explorer 5.01 has problems

SEATTLE—Microsoft Corp. has warned customers that its Internet Explorer Web browser has a security flaw that could allow hackers to run programs on another user's computer.

The glitch causes Internet Explorer to automatically open specially coded attachments in e-mail without warning, possibly unleashing programs that could do anything from sending users a harmless message to deleting files from their computers, the Redmond-based software company warned late Thursday.

Microsoft has developed a patch that can be downloaded from the company's website.

Internet Explorer versions 5.01 and 5.5 are affected.

Scott Culp, Microsoft's security program manager, said Friday the flaw was contained in "a few" out of several hundred Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions, or MIMEs, which are used to encode files as e-mail attachments.

Culp said the problem was a typical software error and was discovered before any viruses could be spread.

"That's the best situation we can hope for, short of perfect software," he said.

Microsoft also was working to install checks for the glitch on virus scanners for corporate customers, he said.

The Redmond-based software giant was notified of the flaw by a security researcher in Spain who had found previous security gaps in Microsoft's Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator. *AP*

'Sonic Cruiser' sharpens Boeing, Airbus contrast

SEATTLE—Super fast or super big? The contrast between Boeing and Airbus Industrie has never been sharper.

Abandoning its attempt to compete with Airbus' A380 superjumbo, Boeing says it will shift its fight to a new arena—speed—with the development of a smaller, radical jet that can travel at close to the speed of sound.

Airlines like the notion of the "Sonic Cruiser," but say they want more details about the proposed craft. And it's too early to speculate about whether Boeing can make the plane a success, analysts say.

"The concept of a higher-speed, medium-size transport aircraft with about 250 seats has great appeal," Japan Airlines spokesman Geoffrey Tudor told The Seattle Times.

In London, the Star Alliance, a code- and cost-sharing network of 15 major airlines, including Lufthansa, Air Canada, United Airlines, Scandinavian Airlines and Air New Zealand, held a news conference Friday to praise Boeing's new jet.

"It's a tactically brilliant move, if the jet is cost-effective and the price is right," Air Canada chief executive Robert Milton said.

For now, the new plane exists only on paper—or more accurately, as data within Boeing's design computers.

Drawings of the Sonic Cruiser show an aircraft unlike any other existing commercial jet, with delta wings near its tail, two smaller wings near the nose, and a pair of engines blended into the wing. It would fly faster than any other jetliner except for the supersonic Concorde. *AP*

New observers to monitor Mitsubishi

PEORIA, Illinois—During the almost two years since Mitsubishi settled a sexual harassment lawsuit, court-appointed observers have monitored efforts to rid the automaker's Illinois manufacturing plant of discrimination.

Now, months before their work is scheduled to cease, a settlement in a racial discrimination lawsuit provides for a new team to take the monitors' place.

Under the more than $3.4-million settlement approved by a federal judge Thursday, the new monitors will work with Mitsubishi over two years to evaluate the company's anti-discrimination policies and suggest any changes necessary. They also will review new complaints to make sure they are handled properly.

Gael O'Brien, spokeswoman for Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing of America, said the monitors are welcome at the Normal manufacturing plant.

"We look forward to working with them because we are committed to developing the most appropriate practices possible to ensure zero tolerance," she said Friday.

Officials said the new monitors, Duke University law professor James Coleman Jr. and central Illinois attorney Carol Hanson Posegate, are scheduled to begin oversight after the settlement is finalized in July. *AP*

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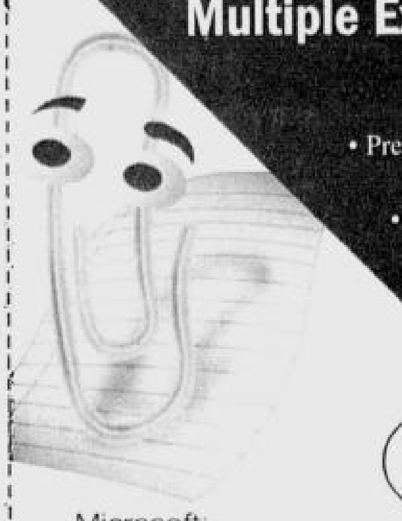

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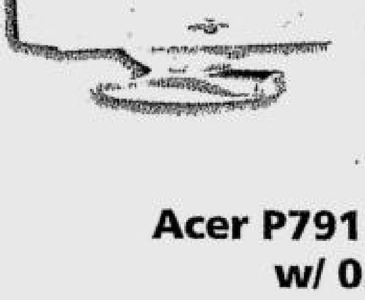

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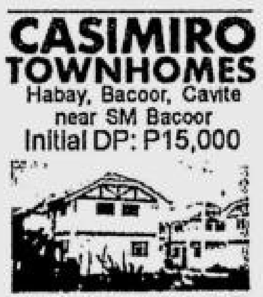

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Starex, L300, Coaster Bus Cars 637-7396 • 631-3496

Bnew HiAce 6336754 9100893

Van Coaster Bus 440-91-71

CARS•VANS•8957247•8969956 BUS•CSTER•BRIDAL•8955623

IT/ Hiace 9136710/4333682

L300 T 4161105 / 7411356

L300 VV (Roger) 578-8917

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VAN 12-15 STR. 8257135

Car Vans 4535288/9296250

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2% w/oTaking Car 3732083

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3646928

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523-24

2% w/o taking car 7262780

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BAKERY EQUIPMENT

Ice Crusher Shaver Other Kitchen Equip T-9981170

PETS

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SPORTING GOODS

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1Riso GR1700Mdl P180T w/ 2drums 2940659 0917-5382461

Yamaha XJR 1200 cc 194 P250T Yamaha Majesty T-3635865

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B/SELL FUL PD EDUC PLAN 7137284•09177939632

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Qualification: preferably ENGR/ARCH with experience in housing administration visit FILMAL REALTY CORPORATION W-1408 West PSE Centre Exchange Rd. Ortigas, Pasig, 6310152 631-0161 / 637-3335-37

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SALES CLERK
w/Exp., Smart, Computer Lit.
920-5715 • 435-2511

Masseuse, Aerobics / Gym Intructress, Life Guard Mila 646-1118 Ime 892-2759

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Medic World 5/F, Bldg. A SM Megamall 632-9323 to 24

SECRETARY w/computer & bookkeeping experience Call 9297110 9248217

WANTED: (1) Female NURSE; (2) MIDWIVES; (1) Female MEDICAL SECRETARY •18-25 yrs. old. Single. Apply personally at 1748 Dian St. Barangay Palanan, Makati City, 9:00 am-4:00pm

MALE/FEMALE

CARE GIVER T5280722

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Need: H/Maids Yaya Nurse Family Driver Call 660-4589

Ofc Staff 9134470 Roxan

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MALE/FEMALE

Office Staff 9134470 Lee

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

Perico's Pawnshop 83 Goplao Bldg. Dolores Sn Fdo Pamp On all expd. on April 04' 01 P.J. David Auctioneer

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Boneless Bangus Making Seminar Mr. Guarin 640-9022

•EARN FR HOME 8531008•

★ Organic Fertilizer ★ dealership 8175511 8944950

JUICE DRINK MAKING BUSS. FREE DEMO 2553584/2537617

RTW / Swimsuits 727-4934

RTW Cash/Consign 373-8821

T-SHIRT SALE TEL4383147

PUBLIC NOTICES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

WOORI NARA CORPORATION Open for DEALERSHIP Korean Red Ginseng. Pls. call (043)7572222; Fax (043) 7572121

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of MA. PARALUMAN EDRALIN GABRIEL was extrajudicially settled by her heirs per Doc. No. 740; Page No. 78; Book No. 1; Series of 2001 of Notary Public Vicente Roy L. Kayaban, Jr. of Manila
(PDI-Mar. 19, 26 & Apr. 2, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lost BDC-CP#03205072 Mar. 8 2001 & its Confirm Cert# 2379126 & 2379137 dated Mar. 3, 2001

Notice is given that the PROC Passport No. 824027 under the name of Keng Cho was Lost. (PDI-4/2/01)

PERSONAL

Happy Birthday, BOYET!
Love, Ding, Linda & Kids

JARDINE LLOYD THOMPSON INSURANCE BROKERS
Incorporated

We're moving
to our new office effective 02 April 2001

25th Floor, Philamlife Tower
8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
Philippines 1226

Our new Contact Numbers are:

Tel. No. (632) 884-5600
Fax No. (632) 885-7080

A Jardine Matheson Associate Company

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region VII, Central Visayas

NOTICE TO ALL INTERESTED WHITE CORNGRAIN MILLERS (CENTRAL VISAYAS - REGION 7)

The government through the Department of Agriculture/National Food Authority, is importing a total volume of 30,000 MT with 10% more or less white corngrains to ensure the food security requirements of white corngrits consumers at the Visayas region.

As a result of the consultation meetings with the cornmillers, the distribution scheme shall be through the allocation system.

All interested cornmillers who intend to avail of the white corngrains allocation should be guided by the following:

1. The volume shall be 30,000 MT with 10% more or less white corngrains, disport Cebu.
2. The selling price is P8.25/kg ex-vessel Cebu.
3. The letter of intent (LOI) to avail of the corn allocation shall be submitted by interested corn millers stating therein the volume requested which can be up to a maximum of three (3) months of their requirements based on their milling capacities as indicated in their registration/license with the National Food Authority (NFA).
4. Interested corn millers are allowed to submit their LOI starting from April 2, 2001 up to April 6, 2001. A copy of the NFA registration/license and the documents indicating their milling capacity and the number of hours of operation shall be submitted together with their LOI.
5. All LOIs shall be addressed/submitted to the NFA through the Directorate for Marketing Operations (DMO), Central Office, 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City or at the nearest NFA provincial office under Region 7 - Central Visayas, where the applicant is based.
6. NFA shall prepare a list of all corn millers that shall be given white corngrains allocation. Based on the list, a Notice of Allocation/Award shall be issued. The Notice shall include the demand for the payment of P1.00/kg commitment fee equivalent to the amount due for the total allocation.
7. Payment for the commitment fee shall be made within three (3) days from the receipt of the Notice of Allocation/Award. Payment of the remaining balance shall be made three (3) days prior to the arrival of the vessel.
8. The payment of the commitment fee can be made at NFA Central Office, 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City or at the nearest NFA provincial offices where the applicant is based.
9. Payment of the commitment fee and the remaining balance shall be in Cash/ Cashier's/Manager's check.
10. The allocation system for the 30,000 MT white corngrains is subject to the Terms and Conditions set forth by the NFA. All interested applicants are required to secure the Terms and Conditions from the NFA at DMO or at the nearest NFA provincial office where the applicant is based.
11. The corn millers shall dispose of the white corngrains in corngrits form only to the consumers through the retailers at P15.00/kg.
12. The NFA reserves the right to determine, set, reallocate on pro-data basis or forfeit any allocated volume.

For further inquiries, contact the NFA-DMO at telephone number 712-1572, 712-1564 and 712-1928.

Copies of the Terms and Conditions on the allocation system can be secured from the same office.

(Sgd.) ANTHONY R. A. ABAD
Administrator

(PDI-March 31 & April 1 and 2, 2001)

PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY
PORT DISTRICT OFFICE · MANILA

March 30, 2001
Date

INVITATION TO BID
SHORE CRANES FOR SALE

The PPA Port District Office Manila's Disposal Committee invites interested parties to purchase by way of sealed bids on "AS IS, WHERE IS" basis, the following properties/items:

DESCRIPTION	FLOOR PRICE	LOCATION
Liebherr Shore Crane No. 1	P11,386,275	MICT
Liebherr Shore Crane No. 2	11,386,275	MICT

Above floor prices do not include expenses incidental to removal of the crane/s which shall be for the account of the winning bidder.

SCHEDULE

1. Issuance of Bid Forms - April 2-25, 2001
2. Pre-Bid Conference - April 30, 2001
3. Submission of Sealed Bids - Not later than 2:00 PM of May 14, 2001
4. Opening of Sealed Bids - May 14, 2001 - 2:00 PM
5. Venue - Conference Room, 3rd Floor, PDO Manila Bldg., South Harbor, Port Area, Manila.

Bid Forms, Terms of Reference and detailed list/description of abovementioned properties shall be issued upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00).

PPA-PDO Manila reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereof, to waive any defect in the bids received and to accept bid or bids which is or are advantageous to the Philippine Ports Authority.

For further details, including bid forms, rules and regulations, please contact the PBAC Secretariat, Tel # 527-76-01 loc. 215 or FAX # 527-47-04.

(Sgd.) LEOPOLDO F. BUNGUBUNG
Port District Manager / Chairman
PDO-Manila Disposal Committee

(PDI – March 30, April 2 & 4, 2001)

PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY
PORT DISTRICT OFFICE · MANILA

March 30, 2001
Date

INVITATION TO BID

The PPA Port District Office Manila's Disposal Committee invites interested parties to purchase by way of sealed bids on "AS IS, WHERE IS" basis, the following properties/items:

DESCRIPTION	FLOOR PRICE	LOCATION
One (1) lot STU Spare Parts for various cargo handling equipment	P493,550	Container Van at Pier 13, South Harbor

SCHEDULE

1. Issuance of Bid Forms - April 2-25, 2001
2. Pre-Bid Conference - April 30, 2001
3. Submission of Sealed Bids - May 16, 2001
4. Opening of Sealed Bids - May 16, 2001 - 2:00 PM
5. Venue - Conference Room, 3rd Floor, PDO Manila Bldg., South Harbor, Port Area, Manila.

Bid Forms, Terms of Reference and detailed list/description of abovementioned properties shall be issued upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00).

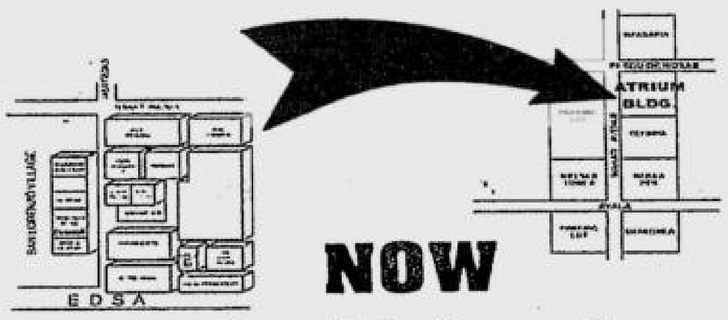
PPA-PDO Manila reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereof, to waive any defect in the bids received and to accept bid or bids which is or are advantageous to the Philippine Ports Authority.

For further details, including bid forms, rules and regulations, please contact the PBAC Secretariat, Tel # 527-76-01 loc. 215 or FAX # 527-47-04.

(Sgd.) LEOPOLDO F. BUNGUBUNG
Port District Manager / Chairman
PDO-Manila Disposal Committee

(PDI – March 30 April 2 & 4, 2001)

Inquirer's Makati Branch



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Mr. Victor Navarro
Times City News Agency #8 Mt. Province Alley,
2nd Floor Maharlika Livelihood Center Baguio City
Tel Nos. (074) 443-4533/445-3175/443-4381
Mr. Rey Elatan
Cora's News Agency #58 Magnolia Alley,
Maharlika Livelihood Center,
Baguio City
Tel No. (074) 442-8175
Mr. Juanito Castro
J & R Agency
Panung Lot Upper Mabini Street
(fronting Victoria Supermart) Baguio City
Tel Nos. 444-6525 (074) 304-2611
Cellphone No. (0918) 280-6175
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Mr. Romero Clarin c/o Ms. Wilma C. Dayrit
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Perez Educational & Magazine Store
R&S Perez Building, 45 D. Silang Street,
Batangas City
Tel Nos. (043) 723-0616/(043) 980-6042
Bulacan
Mr. Manolo Vigo
Fausta Village, Tabang Bag. Malolos, Bulacan
Telefax (044) 893-1214, EasyCall 141-207284
Mr. Rodolfo D. Gregorio
263 Rizal, Tarcan, Baliwag, Bulacan
Tel No. (044) 766-1280
Office: Care Communications
Baliwag Shopping Center, 2nd Floor BMG Building
Borrero St. Poblacion, Baliwag, Bulacan
Cabanatuan City
Mr. Ruel Capule
#7 Santander Street, Kapt. Pepe Subdivision
Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija
Tel No. (044) 463-0823, E-mail: rucap@maccom.com
City Supermart
Sanciangco Street, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija
Tel No. (044) 463-1149
Mr. Heyward Pablo
#637 Zulueta Street, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija
Tel No. (044) 463-2902

Nueva Vizcaya
Homer John L. Manzano
Nueva Vizcaya Travel & Tours
Poblacion North Solano, Nueva Vizcaya
Telefax No. (078) 3267172
Pampanga
Mr. Noel Cabasro
Lot 4 Block 20 Phase II
Corner St. Peter and St. Jude Streets
St. Jude Village, San Fernando, Pampanga
Tel Nos. (045) 963-3716/(0918) 506-6213
Gapasa Building, Dolores Homesite
McArthur Highway, Dolores, San Fernando, Pampanga
Tel. (045) 961-3787, e-mail: phonsum@pampworld.net.ph
Pangasinan
Mr. Vic Chua
JVC Cargo Forwarders Co. Ltd.
243 Rizal Street, Calasiao, Pangasinan
Tel No. (075) 522-0505/522-0550
Mr. Mario Nowales
Mangoel Bookstore
AB Fernandez Avenue, Dagupan City, Pangasinan
Tel No. (075) 522-2328 Fax No. (075) 522-0319
Mr. Herminio Romero
Romero's Trading
Rizal Street, Poblacion, Mangaldan, Pangasinan
Tel No. (075) 523-6504/523-5872
Puerto Princesa
Ms. Angelita Leonor
Leonor's Minimart
E. Valencia Street, Puerto Princesa City
Tel Nos. (048) 434-2280/433-2531/433-2551
Mr. Tomas Chay Tan
49 Quezon Street, Puerto Princesa City
Tel No. (048) 433-2832, Cell No. (0918) 2330727
Tuguegarao
Mr. Richmont Pobre
Agbanug Newsstand, Stall #7 Tuguegarao Central Market
Gomez Street, Tuguegarao, Cagayan
Tel No. (078) 846-1180/844-0364
E-mail: pobre@cag.pworld.net.ph
Tarlac City
Ms. Erlie I. Gudueco c/o E.D. Baterina
F. Tañedo Street, Tarlac City
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Marquez Pueblo, Dita, Sta. Rosa, Laguna
Tel Nos. (049) 531-3776/(049) 837-3623/(0912) 818-3359
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Tel No. (049) 531-4529
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MSC Data Exchange Co.
55 Paseo de Escudero, San Pablo City
Tel Nos. (049) 562-4597, Fax No. (049) 562-1444
Email: sbaybay@msc.edu.ph
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Ms. Alice Pua Uy
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Ms. Catalina Javier
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434 Provincial Road, Centro East, Santiago City
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Ms. Irene Solmirano
Brgy. 34 Oro Site, Legaspi City
Tel No. (052) 820-1274/480-6030
Cathy P. Sendin
SM Prieto Marketing
Quezon Avenue, Legaspi City
Tel No. (052) 214-3043/214-3648/820-3748
Lipa City
Ms. Matilde Montego c/o Ms. Rose Perez
Librero Bookstore, Pacia Building, T.M. Kalaw St.
(near Lipa Bank), 9217 Lipa City
Tel Nos. (043) 7563726/7561330
Email: mmeun@lipa.ehost
Naga City
Mr. Ramon B. Sia
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Ground Floor Supermarket, General Luna Street,
Naga City. Tel No. (054) 473-8711

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Ms. Marieta Santos
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Door C, MB Building, Fuentes Drive
Roxas City
Tel. No. (036) 621-5586/522-6925
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Mr. Neil Montejo
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246 Avenida Veteranos
Tacloban City
Tel. Nos. (053)325-6743/321-2954
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c/o In-hand Negros Inc.
C.L. Montelibano Drive
Mandalagan, Bacolod City
(034) 433-3628/712-7021
Cebu
Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario Street, Cebu City
Tel. No. (032) 232-7618
Dumaguete City
Mr. Raymund Mercado
Hi-Top News Mag and Gen. Merchandise
Dr. V. Locsin Street, Dumaguete City
Tel. No. (035) 225-5796/225-4364
Mr. Ramon Charles Sy
New Renie's
Dr. V. Locsin Street, Dumaguete City
Tel. No. (035) 225-4320
Iloilo
Eddie-Mar News and Magazine Center
Ground Floor, Bombo Radio Building
Mapa Street, Iloilo City
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OMNI General Merchandise
Dr. 1 De Leon Building
Pabayo-Pacana Streets, Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. No. (08822) 722-530
Grandstar News and Magazines
122 Cruz Taal corner Pabayo Street
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. No. (088) 857-2571/857-1612
Telefax: (088) 231-3248
E-mail: grandstar@hotmail.com
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Marquez News and Magazine Agency
51 Sinsuat Avenue, Cotabato City
Tel.: (064) 421-3264
Davao City
Dabaw Periodicals, Inc.
Duterte Street, Davao City
(fronting Galleria Hotel)
Tel. No. (082) 226-4406/221-3379/221-3424/226-2931

Babasahin ATBP.
Lower Level, Gaisano Mall, Bajada
Davao City
Ground Floor, Victoria Plaza, Bajada
Davao City
Tel. No. (082) 221-3927/227-4410
General Santos
Mr. Ramon Dimalanta
GSC Newscenter, Dimalanta Building
35 Pioneer Avenue, General Santos City
Tel. Nos. (083)552-3352
Telefax No. (083) 301-8731
Pagadian City
Mr. Eduardo Villar Clavero
Edmar News - Advertising Agency
Bonifacio Street, Pagadian City
Tel. No. (062) 215-1448/214-2641
Zamboanga
Mr. James Hao
Marlen's Variety Store, 86-88 Sevilla Street
Zamboanga City
Tel. Nos. (062) 991-4294/991-1438
Mr. Ruben Bautista
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☎ 8114361 ☎ 8114370 ☎ 8114012 Fax 8925578
ALI MALL, CUBAO, QUEZON CITY
☎ 912-9008-11 Fax 912-9011
SM MEGAMALL, MANDALUYONG CITY
☎ 6350219 ☎ 6372008 Fax 6350220
G/F TRINITY BLDG., 636 T.M. KALAW ST., ERMITA, MANILA
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Monday to Sunday
12:00 noon
Day before publication

RAMON B. ALONZO II

(30 July 1962 - 31 March 2001)

Sales Unit Manager
Cebu 1 Agency
The Prumerica Life Insurance Company, Inc.

Died in the Grace of the Lord after receiving the Last Sacraments, at 2:55 in the morning of 31 March 2001.

The Prumerica Family joins his parents **Filomeno** and **Nora**; brother **Roland**; sister-in-law **Ma. Regina** and nephews **Roell Gabriel** and **Ron Gabriel**, friends, and all those who knew and loved **Mon**, in this time of grief.

His remains lie in state at the Alonzo Family Residence at 16 Rabago Avenue, Rosary Heights, Cotabato City.

HERMINIA MARCELO TAY

Peacefully joined our Creator on March 31, 2001 at the age of 77.

She is survived by her nieces and nephews **Bernie**, **Johnny** (†) and **Linda**, **Charl**, **Janie** and **Mario**, **Reggie** and **Linda**, **Monette** and **Carli**; grandnieces and nephews **Cito** and **Anee**, **Rohan**, **Jet-Jet**, **Joanne**, **Monica**, **Camille**, **Alan**, **Philip**, **Louie**, **Kitty**, **Carl** and **Joval**, **Trina**; great grand nephews **Keith** and **Brandon**; other relatives and friends.

Her remains lie in state at St. Andrew Chapel of the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels in Sucat, Parañaque. Interment will be on Wednesday, April 04, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

COL. ERNESTO L. GUZMAN (Ret.)

Died in the Grace of our Lord on March 30, 2001 at the age of 84.

His bereaved wife **Florentina**; children **Claro** and **Monette**, **Marvy** and **Alex**, **Celia** and **Cef**, **Jong** and **Yoly**, **Ike** and **Liz**; grandchildren **John**, **Ernie**, **Gingging**, **Christy**, **Cathy**, **Kokoy**, **Annalyn**, **Melissa**, **Ritchie** and **Angel**; great grandchildren **Jelo**, **Kyle**, **Megan** and **Tonton**; sister **Julieta**; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, April 4, 2001 at the Laloma Cemetery.

> **"Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."**
>
> Matthew 10:39

PROF. JOSEFINA T. MARIANO

Peacefully went to be with our Lord on March 30, 2001 at the age of 73.

Her sisters, **Virginia**, **Cristina** and **Lydia**, brothers, **Isagani** (†), **Atty. Jose** (†), **Atty. Jorge**, **Atty. Renato**, **Herminio** and family wish to inform relatives and friends that her body lies in state at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Church, Maysilo, Malabon, M.M.

Cremation will be on Tuesday, April 3, 2001, 11:00 AM at Eternal Garden, Caloocan City.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

DR. ENRIQUE F. DELA ROSA, SR.

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on March 21, 2001 at the age of 69.

His loving wife **Victoria**; children **Willy**, **Romy** and **Esple, Jr.** and **Eli**, **Thess**, **Rose**, **Atoy** and grandchild **Angelika** would like to thank friends and relatives who supported us during our bereavement.

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People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

CO

DUMRIQUE

BRIZUELA

LIONS CLUBS LAUNCHES CANDIDATES

Lions Clubs International District 301-D2 governor Johnny T. Co announced the formal launching of the candidacies of zone chair Susan Brizuela for vice district governor and vice district governor Alejo Dumrique for governor for Lion year 2001-2002 April 1 at the Camp Aguinaldo Officers' Club. The tandem, whose slogan is "Leading the Way to Dedicated Service," represents District 301-D2 in the forthcoming Multiple District Convention to be held in Bagulo this May. Brizuela is being sponsored by her home club, the Pasig Capitol Lions Club while Dumrique's home club is the Marikina (host) Lions Club.

APPLE AT POKEMON TOURNEY

Apple Philippines brings Pokémon fans to a higher level of fun, learning, and adventure as it sponsors the monthly Pokémon Trading Card Game (TCG) tournament. Recently held at Glorietta Mall, the TCG Design Contest has gone high-tech as contestants do away with manual drawing and now use iMac computers in capturing their favorite Pokémon characters. Known for ease of use and creative features, iMacs in delicious colors are now a regular sight at every Pokemon TCG tournament. Photo shows Apple Philippines area associate Donna Llorin and Pikachu with TCG design contest winners (from left) Gerald dela Cruz, 13, Jonathan Manalo, 23, and Jomar Cabalida, 12.

PROVIDENCE TOWER FOOD CENTER

The Providence Tower, a flagship project of Alta Vitas Land and Holdings, Inc. formally opened its Food Center at the first and second floors of the 24-story residential building at Leon Guinto corner Estrada Street, just across De La Salle University, St. Benilde and St. Scholastica's College. Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuno (right) and Brother Andrew Z. Gonzales (left) of De La Salle University led the special guests at the March 14 opening. With them are Hernan Vitas, chair and CEO of Alta Vitas Land Holdings, Inc., and Mrs. Zuno.

Covanta signifies support for CNPC consortium

As the result of a corporate-wide review and reprioritization of power development opportunities worldwide, Covanta Energy Corporation (formerly Ogden Energy) withdrew its participation in the Central Negros Power Corporation (CNPC) consortium which intends to embark on a 50-MW circulating fluidized bed power project in Negros Occidental. Within the Philippines, Covanta Energy will focus on the ongoing operations of its existing power plants.

"The proposed 50-MW circulating fluidized bed power plant will use the latest in clean coal technologies and will be a competitive, efficient, reliable, and environmentally friendly addition to the power generation mix in the Visayan grid," according to Frank Sine, Covanta Energy vice president.

"Covanta Energy is proud of our contributions to this project that will stabilize power supply on Negros Island and reduce power rates. We are confident that the CNPC consortium will conclude successful development of the project, and we will continue to provide them our full support during this period of transition," he added.

Covanta Energy Corporation (NYSE: COV) is an internationally recognized designer, developer, owner and operator of power generation projects and provider of related infrastructure services. The Company's independent power business develops, structures, owns, operates and maintains projects that generate power for sale to utilities and industrial users worldwide. Covanta Energy's waste-to-energy facilities convert municipal solid waste into energy for numerous communities, predominantly in the United States. The company also offers single-source design/build/operate capabilities for water and wastewater treatment infrastructures.

Photography workshop

NAVASERO

Popular photographer Mandy Navasero will hold her annual workshop on basic photography every Sunday from April 7 to May 26. The workshop includes lectures, demonstrations, audio-visual presentations and darkroom work. Lectures will be held in a studio cum classroom. Mandy is also available for consultation by appointment. For more details, call Navasero Communications at 522-1901, 522-1905, 522-5185, telefax 522-5189, cell no. 0917-5344051, or e-mail mn_photocom@i-manila.com.ph.

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AMTI-DELL ALLIANCE

Accent Micro Technologies, Inc. corporate sales manager Eden Paulo addresses the media on the sales and marketing strategies of Accent Micro Technologies, Inc. and Dell Philippines for the year during their press conference held recently at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati City.

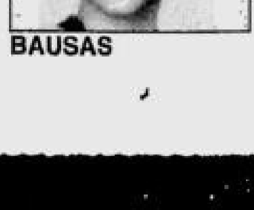
BITS & Clips

Ad-In's all-girl tennis

Ad-In Service and Consultancy will hold the 1st Ad-In All Girls Juniors Tennis Tournament on April 4 to 8 at the Metropolitan Club, Estrella Street, Bel-Air, Makati City. The second leg is scheduled on May 16 to 19 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. The tourney is sanctioned by the Philippine Tennis Association. For inquiries, call Lawyer Al Agra at 6344175 and 6344199. Entry forms are available at the Metropolitan Club tennis lounge, Philta Office and Ad-In office at Unit 2206 Medical Plaza Ortigas Building, San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City.

NFA seminar on peanut quality

The Food Development Center of the National Food Authority, in cooperation with the Peanut Collaborative Research Support Program of the University of Georgia in the United States, will conduct a seminar on "Postharvest Technologies for Upgrading Peanut Quality and Expanding Production and Markets" on Tuesday, April 3 from 8 a.m. to 12 noon at the Food Development Center Compound, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila. For inquiries, call Luvy Maala of the Food Development Center, NFA, at 838-4014 to 17, 838-4478, and 838-4601, or fax 838-4692/4016.



BAUSAS

Assumption cum laude

Armie Marie Chiu Bausas graduated cum laude with a Bachelor's degree in Communication, major in advertising and public relations from Assumption College on March 25. She also received the Departmental Award for Communications and the Mother Marthe Merit Society Award for her leadership and service.

SHARING THE BLESSINGS

Manprom Inc. (A Batey Affiliate), one of the country's first all-Filipino owned ad agencies donated last December in the name of its clients, a substantial donation in check to the Asilo de San Vicente Paul Orphanage. Sister Adela Pueyo (second from left) and Sister Leticia Moran (fourth from right) received the check from Manprom representatives (from left) Nimfa Arugay, administrative officer; Yvonne de Paula, general manager; Tina Callejo, accounts manager; Suzie Maturan, finance officer and chief operating officer; and Lot Arguelles, account manager.

UNBOWED BY BEAR MARKET

Fund managers putting cash back to work

LONDON—Global fund managers are putting cash back to work in hard-hit equity markets, unbowed by the most savage bear market in 25 years.

A series of Reuters polls of 53 fund managers and strategists in Japan, Europe, Britain and the United States showed that a majority were reinvesting cash, with Japanese and European stocks getting the lion's share of the flows. Investors in every region, except the United States, cut back on cash holdings in equity portfolios, while mixed asset portfolios in Japan and Britain upped stock market exposure.

Fears of a global economic slowdown and a corporate profits famine have dealt severe losses to stocks around the world in 2001, taking many major global indices well below 20 percent off their peaks.

The MSCI World Index of global equities has suffered its steepest six-month fall since the dark days of 1974, when the price of oil was high, inflation was rampant and economic growth hobbled.

But many strategists think that with valuations having fallen steeply and with monetary easing expected in all of the major economies in coming months, the time to buy has come.

"While there are risks for the markets from here, our view is that buying into further bad corporate news should now pay off," said Peter Oppenheimer, a global strategist at HSBC in London, who has increased his equity exposure by 5 percent in mixed portfolios to 65 percent.

"The risk-reward balance has now shifted toward adding to equity weightings."

Cash in British equity portfolios fell to 3.1 percent from 4 percent in February, as US equity holdings rose by 1.3 percentage points to 43.1 percent.

US funds cut back US equities to 44 percent in March, down from February's allocation of 47 percent.

With America's main stock indices down sharply in March, fund managers raised their allocations to cash, and some selected more foreign stock markets.

Even so, fund managers still kept more assets in US equities in March than they did in the period from November to January, the survey showed.

"The United States is still the growth engine of the world and, on a global basis, US stocks still represent some of the best value," said Donald Berdine, chief investment officer at PNC Advisors.

US stocks took a beating in March as investors became ever more nervous about the state of America's economy, fearing that the Federal Reserve's three half-point interest rate cuts so far this year may not be enough to jump-start the stalled growth rate.

The slowing US economy is taking a toll on corporate profits, with the pain spreading from technology companies last year to Corporate America's biggest names this year.

Equity fund managers operating in the euro zone boosted holdings of Japanese, British, Asian and emerging market stocks, at the same time cutting exposure to North American and domestic equities.

Fixed-income managers also began spending their cash but opted mainly for US and Canadian bond markets, predicting the economic slowdown gripping the continent would spur more rate cuts from central bankers.

Euro zone fund managers and strategists saw cash holdings fall from 1.9 percent to 0.8 percent of portfolios, its lowest level since last October.

Managers used the money to increase holdings of Japanese stocks from 8.7 percent to 10.6 percent, even as the benchmark Nikkei average hit a 16-year closing low on March 13. But the Nikkei recovered slightly after a monetary easing by the Bank of Japan.

"The situation has become a bit more clear since the BOJ lowered rates again and since we also had some announcement that the government will be active again in the equity markets in order to support the Nikkei," said Kommer van Trigt, a senior portfolio manager with Robeco Group in Rotterdam.

Managers in Britain and Japan also upped holdings of Tokyo shares. *Reuters*

US loses enthusiasm in social security plan

WASHINGTON—Americans' enthusiasm for a plan that would let them invest some of their Social Security contributions in the stock market has dropped significantly since late last year, according to an Associated Press poll.

The new survey was taken after two of the toughest weeks the stock market has seen in recent years.

The five-day poll was started a week ago, after the market had just lost over 12 percent of its value in just over two weeks, including its biggest-ever weekly point decline—an 821.21-point drop in the Dow Jones industrial average—in mid-March.

Now, the public is generally split on support for the Bush administration proposal to allow investment of some Social Security money. In polls taken when economic optimism was stronger late last year, people supported allowing investment of Social Security contributions by a 2-1 margin.

Public enthusiasm for investing in the stock market routinely drops as the market goes down, and increases when things turn around.

About half in the poll, 49 percent, said they supported a plan to give people the option of investing some of their Social Security contributions, while 44 percent opposed it, according to the poll conducted for AP by ICR of Media, Pa.

Men liked the idea better than women—57 percent of men compared with 41 percent of women.

"I've seen comments on TV about the stock market going down," said 21-year-old student Che Mansfield of Statesboro, Ga. "I like to be able to depend on my money 100 percent and not 85 percent." *AP*

Mergers, acquisitions business down

NEW YORK—Economic uncertainty and plummeting stock prices are responsible for a steep drop in mergers and acquisition activity during the first quarter of 2001, top dealmakers say.

Global mergers and acquisitions announced between Jan. 1 and March 30 totaled only $443 billion, down 63 percent from the record $1.2 trillion in deals announced for the same period a year earlier, according to figures released Friday by Thomson Financial Securities Data.

In the United States, the value of announced mergers and acquisitions for the quarter dropped 65 percent to $208 billion this quarter from $600 billion in the first quarter of 2000.

Investment bankers who stitch together deals for companies trying to expand market reach were not surprised by the steep declines.

Besides a drop in the number of deals, drastically reduced stock market valuations mean the dollar value of transactions are much lower than they were a year ago.

With the broadest stock market indices drifting in bear market territory amid concerns that the United States may be in a recession, many top company officials are still reluctant to go forward with their merger and acquisition plans.

"I would say there is still a lot of strategic dialogue going on, but CEO confidence is probably as low as I have seen over the last couple years," said Steve Baronoff, global head of mergers and acquisitions for Merrill Lynch & Co.

Rick Leaman, head of mergers and acquisitions for the Americas for UBS Warburg, said inventories "are shrinking, and pallets are not leaving the shipping docks, which would support the theory that the economy is contracting in certain sectors."

Experts say better indications of the economy's direction or an upswing in the stock markets could spark a turnaround.

"I think either one could improve it," said Gregg Polle, co-head of mergers and acquisitions for Salomon Smith Barney. "It's the combination of both that would most dramatically improve it."

The volatility in the stock markets makes deal planning and timing difficult.

"Four percent swings in the Dow have a dampening effect on getting things done," Leaman said.

Stock deals are more difficult to pull off because the share prices of acquiring companies have dropped so low, and continue to fluctuate. That makes buyers less aggressive, and turns sellers wary.

"For people using their stock as currency, it is important to have some sense of relative value," said Doug Braunstein, head of mergers and acquisitions for J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. "You have to have that fundamental confidence level that valuations have reached some consistency whether you are a buyer or a seller."

But CEOs who have shelved expansion plans through mergers and acquisitions for now could regret their decisions later.

"There are probably some people who will do some very good deals where other people wish they had the foresight to move in this environment," Polle said. *AP*

US consumer confidence, spending firm

NEW YORK—The confidence and spending habits of American consumers are holding up even as a tumble in manufacturing in the Chicago area to the lowest level in nearly 20 years in March stoked recession fears.

The conflicting reports gave a muddied picture for further interest rate cuts from the Federal Reserve, which has lowered borrowing costs three times already this year in an attempt to revive a stumbling economy.

The Chicagoland Business Barometer compiled from survey responses from area business purchasing managers fell sharply in March to a seasonally adjusted 35, its lowest since April 1982. The index stood at 43.2 in February.

Anthony Karydakis, a senior financial economist at Banc One Capital Markets in Chicago, said the steep drop-off was "a bit disturbing" after recent signs the ailing manufacturing sector was poised to recover.

"It calls into question whether we've seen the bottom for the manufacturing sector, that relentless erosion in manufacturing," Karydakis said.

The sharp drop in the regional manufacturing report eclipsed the closely watched national survey on consumer confidence from the University of Michigan, which edged higher in March to 91.5 in March from 90.6 in February, down slightly from a preliminary mid-month reading of 91.8.

US Treasury bonds rallied strongly on the factory data, driving two-year note yields to near 2-1/2 year lows at 4.2 percent, as investors bet the Fed might move swiftly to slash borrowing costs, perhaps before its next meeting on May 15, to prop up the flagging manufacturing sector.

The worry is that a prolonged manufacturing downturn could spread to other sectors of the economy. But so far, that has not happened. Consumer spending growth remained intact and the pause in the steep slide in consumer confidence since late last year gave further hope the economy could weather a deep-rooted industrial slump, economists said.

Recently battered stock markets crept higher. The Dow Jones industrial average closed over 79 points, 0.8 percent, higher at 9,878.78 Friday.

Following the sharp drop in Chicago business activity, investors will be closely watching a critical March gauge of manufacturing nationwide, expected Monday from the National Association of Purchasing Management. The manufacturing sector has been contracting for seven months and economists expect another weak month for industrial activity.

While things looked bleaker for US industry, a separate report showed the confidence of Americans about the economy edged upward in March despite the worst quarterly performance in blue-chip stocks since 1960—with most of those equity declines coming this month.

That sudden firming in confidence, which raised some hopes a recent drop in sentiment might not tamp down still-healthy consumer spending, left uncertain the prospect for future interest rate cuts.

The final March index came after the Fed cut interest rates by a half point March 20 for a third time this year, bringing its benchmark overnight bank lending rate to 5 percent.

Wall Street economists had expected the index to fall, partly as a result of heavy stock market losses during the month and many job cut announcements from large US companies suffering from a severe economic slump.

"People still don't feel very good, but what they do believe, evidently, is that lower interest rates are a cushion," said Carol Stone, deputy chief economist at Nomura Securities International.

The expectations index—which reflects how consumers feel about the 12 months ahead and has fallen off most sharply in recent months—rose to 83.9 in March from 80.8. That was down slightly from a preliminary reading of 84. Current conditions eroded slightly to 103.4 from 105.8.

The firming in consumer confidence echoed a report Tuesday from the Conference Board, a New York-based private research firm, that also showed an improvement in consumer attitudes about economic prospects.

The US Commerce Department said in a separate Friday report that consumer spending—which the Fed said it was closely monitoring for signs of weakness after the recent drop in confidence—rose solidly in February.

In a signal economic growth in the first quarter may be stronger than economists' estimates, consumer spending, which fuels two-thirds of US gross domestic product growth, increased 0.3 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of $7.004 trillion, the government said.

Underscoring the strength in spending, Commerce revised its figure for spending in January to a gain of one percent from the previously reported 0.7 percent. January's spending rise was the biggest in 11 months. *Reuters*

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IBP files suit against Tyson

DAKOTA DUNES, South Dakota—Meatpacking giant IBP Inc. filed a lawsuit Friday to force Tyson Foods Co., the world's top poultry producer, to complete its $3.2-billion purchase of the South Dakota company.

The suit in Chancery Court in New Castle County, Del., came a day after Tyson nixed the deal and filed its own lawsuit to end the merger.

"Tyson's actions are completely unjustified by anything that has transpired, and we will do what is necessary to protect our shareholders and our company," Robert Peterson, IBP chair and chief executive, said in a statement late Friday afternoon.

A spokesman for Springdale, Arkansas-based Tyson declined to comment on the suit Friday, saying he had not seen it.

Thursday's decision by Tyson to call off the purchase came nine days after IBP said an investigation into its appetizer unit, DFG Foods, uncovered potential manipulation of financial records and product theft and mismanagement by former unit managers.

"While we continue to believe that the combination of IBP and Tyson would have created the premier protein company in the world, we simply cannot endorse a decision to complete the transaction under the facts as we understand them today," said John Tyson, chair and chief executive of Tyson, on Thursday.

A combination of Tyson and IBP would have created a company with 30 percent of the beef market, 33 percent of the chicken market and 18 percent of the pork market.

Still, analysts weren't surprised by the decision by Tyson to drop the deal.

"They were taking on more than they could really handle here," said George Dahlman, a food analyst with US Bancorp Piper Jaffray.

Tyson's agreement to buy IBP was announced Jan. 1 after a bidding war with Smithfield Foods Inc., the world's largest hog producer and processor.

IBP amended financial reports to the Securities and Exchange Commission after accounting problems were uncovered, and Tyson said Thursday the terms of the deal had been based on inaccurate filings to the SEC. *AP*

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ELECTRONIC BANKING

Fad ups cost instead of bringing it down

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

SINGAPORE—Electronic banking is giving banks in Asia a difficult lesson in economics, and based on the findings of Accenture, formerly Anderson Consulting, the electronic channel was just a fad that in most cases only hiked a bank's cost of doing business instead of bringing it down.

Michael Henry, a partner in Accenture, said in an interview that banks are starting to realize that the so-called e-banking channel was much hyped-up.

He said countries like the Philippines that have only caught the e-banking fever much recently than the others should heed the lessons learned by its counterparts in the region.

"Banks have spent $10 million each to put up the e-channel but it has not produced the expected gains for shareholders and on the contrary even helped destroy shareholders' value," said Henry.

Accenture, a global consultancy firm that had started engaging into venture capital, is a proponent of enhancing shareholders' value by helping banks and other financial institutions put in place eight key imperatives to transform the company.

Charles Tan, another partner in Accenture, named these imperatives as customer relations management, distribution channel optimization, risks and credit management, electronic enablement, financial management and information system, strategic planning, workforce performance, and organization structures.

These eight musts for banks should improve operations and create, rather than destroy value for shareholders, said Tan.

An electronic channel, explained Henry, was envisioned to bring down the costs of banks as clients use the e-channel which is much cheaper for the bank than entertaining customers through the teller or the automated teller machine.

"But the cost of servicing customers has not gone down because even as clients use the e-channel, they still continue to use the teller and the ATM. In fact, the cost even went up," said Henry.

FAD/ C5

Jaguar merges global ad making

NEW YORK—Jaguar Cars is consolidating the job of creating its advertising around the world at the agency Young & Rubicam, as the automaker nears the planned introduction of a less expensive line of its fabled luxury cars.

New York-based Y&R replaces two sibling agencies from the ad holding company WPP Group Plc. that had split the bulk of the account for the past decade.

The WPP agencies Ogilvy & Mather had created Jaguar ads in North America while J. Walter Thompson had handled that duty in Europe and selected markets outside North America.

"The time was right for a change," Mike O'Driscoll, president of Jaguar North America, said in a phone interview Thursday.

Y&R had been retained earlier this year to develop advertising for the launch of the new X-Type sports sedan that Jaguar intends to introduce later this year.

The car is being priced at starting at just under $30,000 and is aimed to broaden the base of prospective customers for Jaguar cars by making them more affordable. The starting price is about $10,000 less than for the least expensive of its other cars, and should compete with the BMW 3-Series and Mercedes C-Class cars.

O'Driscoll said the ad work Y&R presented "took us beyond the automotive genre and captured the specialness of what Jaguar is."

Jaguar intends to continue using the theme "The Art of Performance" in the new work, he said.

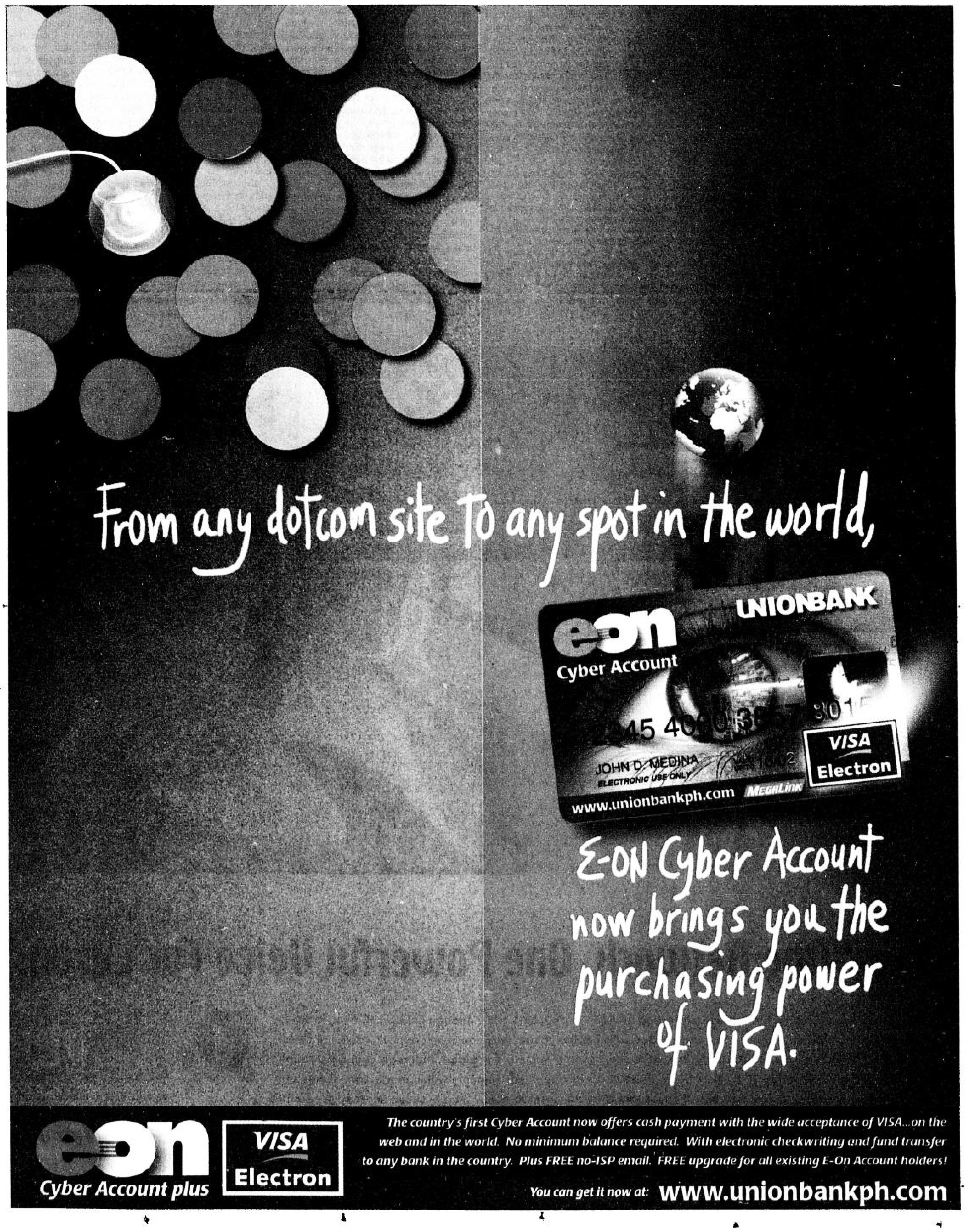
The company declined to say how much it spends on advertising each year but insiders said it was $100 million or more worldwide.

O'Driscoll said Jaguar hopes to more than double its worldwide sales to about 200,000 over the net three to four years from about 90,000 sold worldwide in 2000.

About half of the Jaguar sales are in North America. Jaguar Cars is a British-based unit of US automaker Ford Motor Co.

Y&R, which was acquired by WPP Group last September, already makes ads for Ford's Lincoln-Mercury division and for its Land Rover cars in Europe.

It had some high-profile account losses last year including the US Army, KFC restaurants and the Jell-O brand at Kraft Foods. *AP*



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New BOI chief's motto: Work with the hand you are dealt with

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

BOARD of Investments managing head Vincent Perez, 42, is utilizing some of his Wall Street savvy in packaging the Philippines as a major investment decision in the region.

Perez, a partner of New York-based Lazard Freres Co., bared that the BOI will take an active rather than a passive approach in luring in foreign capital into the country.

Instead of waiting for investment proposals to fall on its laps, Perez says the BOI will knock on the doors of prospective investors with a fairly detailed report on the investment area that they might have a strong interest in.

PEREZ: Wall Street savvy

This is a radical shift from the way the BOI has managed its investment promotion activities that relied mainly on the assumption that foreign investors would be interested in the Philippines because of its strategic location in Asia and its large pool of English-speaking, quality labor force.

Perez says the BOI can ill-afford to wait for opportunities considering the growing competition among countries for foreign capital.

Perez is proposing to create 20 special teams in the BOI that will study investment opportunities in the country, package potential projects, and target key foreign investor groups that would be interested in these areas.

Each team will have experts in technical, promotional and policy in order to ensure their competency in drawing up project proposals that are meant to, at the least, stoke foreign investor interest.

Although it remains to be seen whether the BOI would be up to the task, Perez says he is optimistic that his strategy will work especially in today's competitive environment.

While a boost in the fiscal incentives package will help BOI (the current 6 to 8-year income tax holiday is below the 10- to 12-year tax breaks granted by other Asian countries) in its task, Perez says this is not necessary. "We have to work with the hand we are dealt with, there is no room for complaints."

Perez accepted the BOI post last month (after passing up on the job when it was offered during the Estrada administration) because he believes that the country is now in the best position to stage a recovery.

"I really couldn't say no to GMA (President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's initials) not only because she endorsed me when I enrolled at Wharton but because it is now the most opportune time to attract investors because of the quality of the current administration," Perez says.

In his 15-year experience as a Wall Street investment banker, Perez says foreign investors look to the quality of a corporation's management team before putting their money into that company.

MANAGEMENT STYLES

The adventurous Perez (he goes scuba diving and sailing during his spare time) specialized in packaging debt and equity financing for Argentina, Brazil, India, Indonesia, Mexico, the Philippines and Turkey (his average deal is worth $150 million). Perez is considered a whiz among rainmakers having been named among the Top 100 Emerging Market Superstars by Global Finance magazine in 1994 and cited among the 250 Most Notable Asian Americans in 1995.

Before he joined the government, Perez was the managing director of Next Century Partners, a fund management firm (which includes George Soros among the backers) with $156 million in capital devoted to projects in Southeast Asia.

Perez says there was one significant difference between his job as an investment banker and as the country's chief rah-rah boy (aside from the wide gap in pay scale). "In my previous job, the process is not as important as the end result. In the government, the process is as important as the result."

Management challenges in the New Economy

(First of two parts)

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala

IT IS always a pleasure for me to meet with the officers and members of the Management Association of the Philippines, and I welcome this opportunity to address your Sixth Annual Management Conference. You could not have chosen a more timely topic than the New Economy as your conference theme.

As one of the early proponents of the exciting opportunities presented by the New Economy here in our country, it is probably apt that I again stand in front of you today and give you my thoughts regarding the New Economy at this time when dot-com stocks are in free fall in America and when many are wondering whether the new economic paradigm was just a myth all along.

To get to the point quickly, let me say at once that the Internet has in no way been rendered irrelevant by the recent reversals in the Nasdaq. Although it is certainly a big deal when a stock rises in price to over $100 a year ago and then falls to just a dollar today, this has nothing to do with the fundamental changes wrought by these enabling technologies. The critical changes in the way we do business are real. And the challenges to managers and business leaders remain formidable.

Reality check

What we have recently witnessed and continue to witness is "a reality check" for some of the more extravagant illusions of the Internet phenomenon. Among these illusions—which we who manage serious businesses always found bewildering—was the startling idea of the dot-com innovators that a business need not earn a profit for it to raise capital; that equity valuation models for companies had become irrelevant; and that the business cycle had been abolished. Freed from the old prudential norms, dot-com and tech-related share prices surged to dizzying heights last year. But then the bubble burst, and the decline has continued unabated. What a difference a year makes!

Without question these developments yield invaluable lessons that alter our perspectives on the Internet phenomenon. But I submit that they do not make the New Economy itself a mirage.

As the Economist commented in a recent report: "This pessimistic extreme is as foolish as its optimistic predecessor. A recession, if it happens, will not expose the new economy as a myth. It will show only what should have been obvious anyway—that the (business) cycle has not been abolished. Similarly, slowing investment in high-tech capital will not show that the New Economy is pure hype. Such a decline is again likely for purely cyclical reasons. The idea of a new era does not depend on adding to the stock of high-tech capital at the recent phenomenal rate. It depends on continuing growth in the output produced from any given amount of labor and capital. This kind of productivity . . . (which is) called multi-factor productivity . . . is the true key to a long-term quickening of economic growth."

"The new technologies of the past five years may well have boosted growth in multi-factor productivity. Computers, the Internet and modern telecommunications taken together change working methods dramatically, and in ways that generate continuing opportunities for growth."

Some of the changes necessary in the way we do business are already clear. With respect to costs, many corporations are now betting that the Net will lower their costs faster than it will lower their prices. This is certainly true for banks, for whom online customer costs are only 5 percent that of an ATM customer and much, much cheaper than one who uses a teller. B2B exchanges and online supplier auction sites are revolutionizing the way logistics and the purchasing function is performed. And online sales of airline tickets have impacted heavily on the airline and travel industries.

General Electric, that old economy stalwart, has announced that it stands to save $1.6 billion (pre-tax) simply by conducting Web-based auctions and digitizing internal business processes, a prime example of just how significant an impact these cost implications can have on a major conglomerate.

All indications show that even with the sobering effects of the Nasdaq crash, companies still continue to invest heavily in online initiatives. According to recent research, by 2004, corporations around the world will spend the following on online initiatives annually:

- $6.8 trillion in total e-commerce transactions, with 90 percent of this coming from B2B sales;
- $2.8 trillion on e-procurement;
- $10.2 billion on online platforms to store and share their employees' knowledge over the Net; and
- $12.2 billion on linking customers, sales and marketing over the Web.

Perhaps the interesting thing that has been discovered is that the Internet is not as "disruptive" of the old economy as was once feared. And the virtual companies are starting to hear the lesson about the need to become more physical.

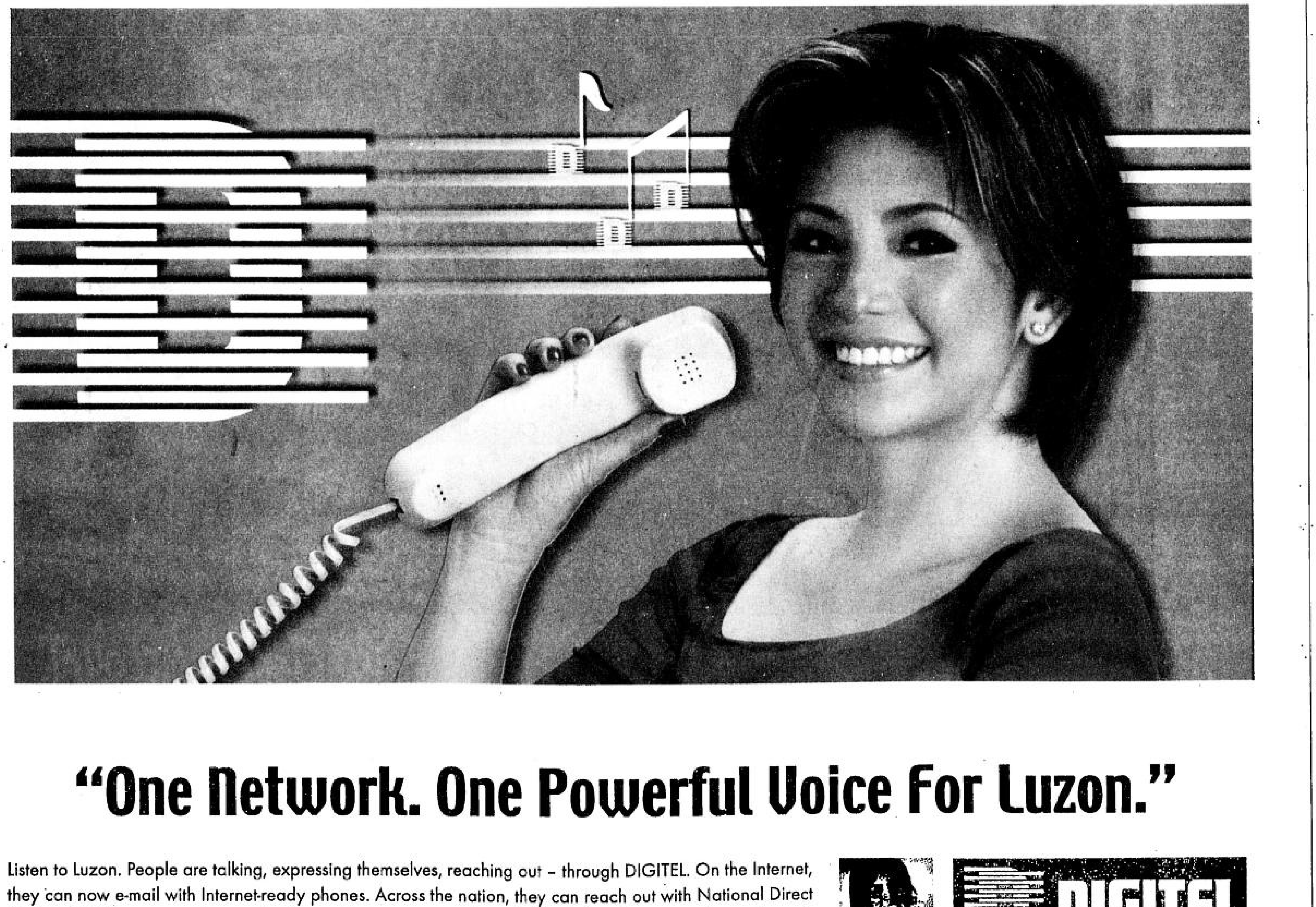
There is a story told about Josh Harris, founder of the streaming media company Pseudo.com. Early last year he stood before a CBS camera on 60 Minutes and declared with certitude: "Our business is to take you guys out. I'm in a race to take CBS out of business . . . That's why we're going to make the big bucks."

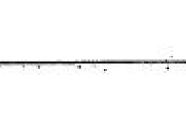
At the time, his bravado didn't seem extreme. The Internet was seen as a classic "disruptive technology" that would favor new entrants like Pseudo.com and send many old-line companies the way of the dodo and Digital Equipment Corp. It hasn't worked out that way. CBS is still on the air. Pseudo.com folded last year.

Interestingly, analysts are now saying that the Internet, instead of being a destroyer of the industrial order, is now looking more and more like an enabler. Writing in the Harvard Business Review, renowned Prof. Michael Porter recently counseled: "We need to move away from the rhetoric about 'Internet industries,' 'e-business strategies,' and a 'new economy' and see the Internet for what it is: an enabling technology—a powerful set of tools that can be used, wisely or unwisely, in almost any industry and as part of almost any strategy."

Old economy companies are successfully adapting the new technology to make changes in the way they do business. At the other end, dot-coms, which were Internet-only operations before, are now trying to plant a foot in the physi-

MANAGEMENT/ C3





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Management

(From page C2)

cal world.

This, I submit, is the broad context in which we should discuss the challenges and opportunities of the New Economy here in our country. We must imbibe the message that the Internet is truly a transformational tool for business. But we must also take to heart the lessons that the dot-com crash has inflicted on some extravagant illusions and expectations.

Hard truths about company-building

One of these precious lessons is the vindication of many hard-earned truths and principles we as managers have known and applied for years in building businesses and organizations.

In a recent article in Fortune magazine, it was observed that the Internet craze spawned a highly abnormal approach to company-building. He writes: "Since time immemorial, most businesses had grown organically, using operating profits from early customers . . . to fund expansion and ad campaigns. But the Internet craze—invariably described as a 'land grab' or 'gold rush'—turned the process on its head. First build a 'brand,' the thinking went. Then get eyeballs. Then turn them into paying customers. Then figure out how to make a business out of it. If there is one element of the dot-com experiment that can be declared a categorical failure, it's this attempted creation of the instant company . . . [You] can't put the marketing cart ahead of the horse."

Another ageless truth is the test of profitability for a company. In this most basic of tests for successful management, most of the dot-com companies sadly could not pass muster. Amazon.com discovered that even with $1.6 billion in sales annually, it still could not turn a profit.

Numerous examples of this abound today, but the point is already plain to see. Successful and enduring companies are not built overnight. They are built piece by piece; they are managed with as much prudence as imagination; and they certainly should turn a profit in their operations.

With the benefit of hindsight, both Internet visionaries and seasoned old pros need to restore balance to their management perspectives in the New Economy. We should all realize that while the new technologies are sophisticated and cutting-edge, the qualities that underpinned business success in the 20th century have not become superfluous.

By defying the hard-earned truths, the dot-com entrepreneurs have learned a tough lesson in business management. Now, as a current joke goes in America, "B2C has come to mean Back to College."

In the New Economy, managing the challenges is not just a matter of learning the new language and processes of the new technologies. It also calls for holding and renewing the old truths we have lived by in business management.

(This article reflects the personal opinion of the author who is a member of the Management Association of the Philippines and president of Ayala Corp. The MAP secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globe.com.ph.)

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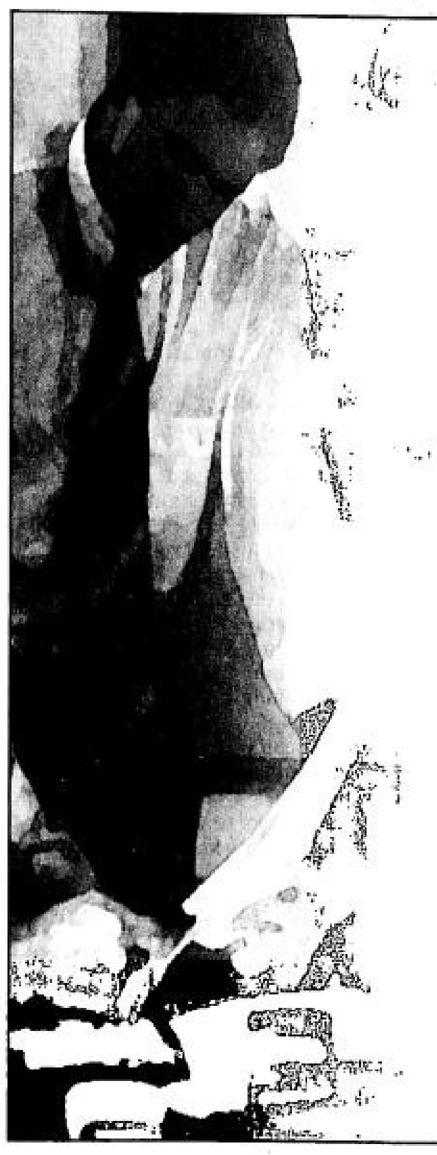

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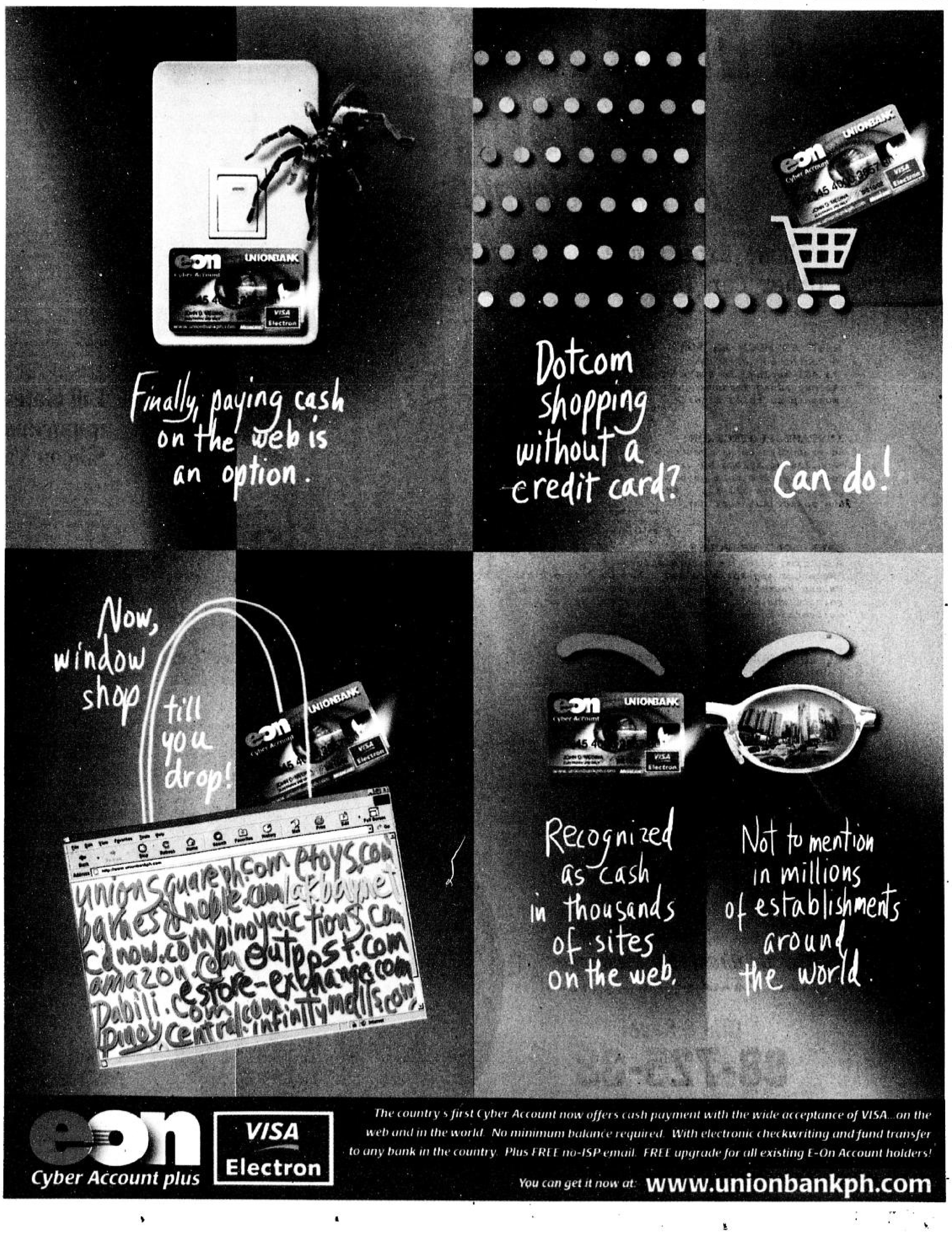
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Making a few well placed investments go far

IT IS often said that the best charity is the one no one has heard about, that good works are not advertised for every one to hear.

But then when one hears of corporations with hearts, those that practice corporate social responsibility not as a token gesture of goodwill but to benefit lives in an immeasurable way, one is truly gladdened.

The following are short stories that will demonstrate what a few well-placed financial investments, not in the stock market, but in the lives of the less fortunate, can do and what a difference they can make.

Cathy Vigilia, executive director of Operation Smile Philippines which is an affiliate of Operation Smile Foundation Inc. of Norfolk, Virginia, USA, has just visited four medical sites for children and adults with harelips and cleft palates. These sites are in Cebu City, Davao, Kalibo, Aklan and Cavite. The international outreach programs where foreign doctors come to the Philippines are usually held in February of every year.

"This has become my life's work ever since I started as a volunteer in 1994," she relates. Her only child, already 25, is a program intern in Norfolk. He is staying with the founders of the program in Norfolk.

In the "I Win, I Care" promo of the International Exchange Bank (iBank), the grand draw of P5 million was set aside for Operation Smile Philippines, said to be the pet project of iBank president, Ramon Sy, himself.

Cathy mentioned the setting up of a Cranio-Facial Center as a long-term dream for Operation Smile Philippines. They are currently cooperating with the Department of Health to consolidate observations on whether deficiencies in folic acid and Vitamin D cause the facial deformities. An NGO has also started a study on the subject using its foreign funding.

In December 1999, Tahanang Walang Hagdan received P1.5 million in the first raffle draw. According to Joy Garcia, operations manager for marketing development and planning (MDP), the amount today forms part of the working capital of their various workshops. These include metal craft, woodcraft, needlecraft, paper recycling and packaging of doctors' samples for companies like Univet and Unilab.

Last year, Tahanan shipped two containers of woodcraft to Hawaii. These days, their people are busy meeting a subcontract to the US for handmade recycled paper fashioned into kites. Having delivered 10,000 sample pieces, they are now expecting orders of 10,000 more every month. Tahanan is also transforming used PET bottles into carpets.

STREET children of Tuloy sa Don Bosco rely mostly on corporate donations.

More importantly, Tahanang Walang Hagdan considers the money from the bank as a windfall, a source of funding they can draw on when they need capitalization for their profitable enterprises.

Out of the 386 persons working and living in Tahanan, 60 percent are disabled in some form. It had to lay off people from the workshops during the Asian crisis. However, with the money from iBank and other donations, they were able to increase their operating capital and recall the workers.

THE SPECIALLY abled have what it takes to be workers and players.

The street kids numbering at least 230 under the care of the Tuloy sa Don Bosco Street children project were among the beneficiaries of "I Win, I Care" promo. According to Fr. Rocky Evangelista, project director, the substantial donation from iBank helps sustain the daily operations and support the residential and educational programs for the children.

Tuloy sa Don Bosco spends over P1 million a month for its resident and nonresident clientele, including food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, values and spiritual/moral formation, psychosocial needs, education and recreation. This is in order to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society as productive and responsible citizens.

Tuloy also coordinates with companies where its graduates of vocational technology courses can undergo training and eventually find employment. "The bank helped spread the word about the foundation and what is being done to save the lives of street children," Father Rocky adds.

The Elsie Gaches Village and the Philippine National Center for the Mentally Challenged were among the other recipients. Florcelia Rosas, head social worker, reveals that at present there are 517 patients in both male and female wards ranging from upper trainable, lower trainable, to the profoundly affected.

They have Down Syndrome, cerebral palsy, former drug dependents, accident victims, or are hydrocephalic, epileptic and autistic.

Those accepted in Elsie Gaches are the aged with no family and no relatives to care for them; or on a case to case basis, no reliable caregiver is available.

Located on a 16-hectare spread in Alabang, Elsie Gaches is now building five more modest buildings. The earlier structures were intended to house only 250 children and patients. With the help of iBank's donation and other corporate sponsors, each new building will house 40 to 45 patients.

iBank has created the iBank Care Foundation which is focused on the youth, the handicapped and the underprivileged, in support of its social commitments.

Bill Gates talk signals importance of new Silicon Valley center

MOUNTAIN VIEW, California—Microsoft Corp. stepped up its Silicon Valley presence by launching a new technology center that the software titan hopes will help its expansive new strategy for Internet-based services.

Microsoft has housed some divisions in the area for years and has 1,500 employees here, but the vast majority of operations are based in Redmond, Washington. Microsoft chair Bill Gates, making a rare public appearance in the valley, and other company executives stressed the company needs partners here.

"We're learning an amazing amount from this community of talented individuals by really, really listening to them," chief executive Steve Ballmer said in a videotaped address.

The new center is ostensibly a research lab where e-commerce companies can spend two weeks to two months testing the usefulness and reliability of their software applications. Microsoft also runs similar labs in Toronto, Boston and Austin, Texas; one is scheduled to open in Chicago this spring.

The Mountain View lab has the added benefit of putting Microsoft in closer contact with software developers and technology gurus at other companies who must be involved if Microsoft is to enact its broad Web-services strategy, known as .Net (pronounced "dot-net").

"Only if we get literally tens of thousands of people to do work around .Net will it achieve a critical mass," Gates told 1,000 people packed into a large white tent on the center grounds. "This will be measured by how many .Net solutions we can build here."

Microsoft executives said the center, which will employ 30 to 50 people, cost more than $10 million without being more precise. Unisys Corp. and Compaq Computer Corp. also have invested in the center and provided servers.

"I think it's a pivotal position for Microsoft in the sense that this will be the place where a great deal of the .Net applications will be developed and tested," said technology analyst Tim Bajarin, president of Creative Strategies Inc. "They recognize that Silicon Valley is at the heart of where a great deal of next-generation technology development takes place."

Gates described .Net as a vision that PCs handheld computers and new hybrids could work together better to share information. He said .Net would be as important to the next phase of computing as the DOS operating system was to early personal computers and Windows was to the next era.

He dismissed the suggestion that such talk was the same kind of hype about the Internet that was deflated in the recent dot-com collapse.

"Although there were excesses in some of the things that took place, the dream is very much alive," Gates said. "And the breakthroughs in hardware and software are going to go even beyond what was expected."

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Disney to cut 4,000 jobs

NEW YORK—The Walt Disney Co. will eliminate 4,000 full-time jobs, or about 3 percent of its workforce, citing "increasingly pressing challenges of the softening economic environment."

The media and entertainment giant said Tuesday it will try to achieve the cuts through a voluntary program within the next month, but that layoffs will occur if the full reduction is not achieved.

The cuts will come across all operating areas, including the company's corporate staff in Burbank, California, and would be accomplished by July, the company said.

The company employs 120,000 workers worldwide, with the greatest concentration—55,000—in Orlando, Florida.

Disney spokesman John Dreyer said the cuts would result in $350 million to $400 million in annual savings. The company will take a one-time charge of less than $250 million, he said.

In a letter addressed to "fellow cast members," Disney chairman Michael Eisner and president Robert Iger said the company has been working to contain costs and operate more efficiently.

"But despite our progress, the economy has become more challenging in recent months and we must continue to seek ways to manage our businesses even more productively," the letter said.

Disney said it would offer special severance incentives, including extended benefits and outplacement services. The company would not provide details of the offer Tuesday.

Since January, the company has laid off 535 workers from its Walt Disney Internet Group. The company also said at that time it would eliminate its tracking stock for the Internet division after failing to make inroads into the portal marketplace, dominated by Yahoo! and America Online.

In a separate move, Walt Disney World, central Florida's largest employer, ordered a hiring freeze. Only critical positions will be filled there.

DISNEY/ C8

Fad . . .

(From page C1)

Henry said banks that have already put up the electronic channel should instead try to maximize the investment by using the technology to improve internal operations.

He pointed out that in the area of trade financing, banks can already use the e-channel technology to review applications, log in customer relations management tools, up to credit scoring.

In fact, Henry said, Accenture has tied up with a global payments provider to put up an independent company that would compete with banks in trade financing.

He boasted that once Accenture has launched the new company, it could bring down the cost of a letter-of-credit being used by exporters and importers by 80 percent because much of the process would be handled electronically.

In the Philippines, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has approved less than 10 applications for e-banking. Among the proponents of this in the country are Union Bank of the Philippines and 1st e-Bank, formerly PDCP Bank of the Metro Pacific Group.

The BSP said that any bank that wants to provide electronic banking services should have in place a risk-management process to monitor any risks, including viruses, that may arise from the new banking activity.

The BSP also wants to see how the electronic system is linked to the bank's other infrastructure, how transaction and data flow through the network, and what types of telecommunications channels with remote access capabilities are installed.

The central bank has also asked applicants to submit a manual on security policies and producers describing the bank's security organization. The BSP also wants to know how electronic banking would help the bank achieve its overall objective.

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Giving women a competitive advantage

By Gertie Ampil Tirona

WAKING up to the reality that women are finally being given the wherewithal to compete in the workplace is like being roused from a horrible nightmare. Disturbing images of disadvantaged and marginalized women of yesteryears persist to haunt and daunt.

To this day, even so-called successful women are still closet victims of physical and psychological battering. They remain objects of sexual desire, harassment and abuse. Proverbial second stringers in a patriarchal society, their cultural entrapment forces the reluctant acceptance of a hapless fate alongside society's poor and powerless.

There's no mistaking that a lot of hard work, guts and good luck still needs to be combined with a systematic, deliberate plan to push capacity building to the limits for women as well as for men. In Asia, turn of the century projections for economic takeoff and the realization of that elusive dream of parity with the First World were so positive that positioning both sexes for public and private sector leadership and managerial roles was imperative. Hence the push for MBAs and short-course programs to multiply HRD interventions across economies.

But millions of training funds, one regional financial crisis and several corrupt governments later, we're back to square one—again searching for fast-track mechanisms to recapture lost opportunities. Compounding the situation further is the increasingly globalized marketplace.

In their recently published book "Managing People in Asian Organizations," one of the Asian Institute of Management's women faculty experts in Strategic Human Resource Management, Professor Gloria de Guzman, surfaces several new dimensions to the capacity-building campaign: "Whether we like it or not, we now have to manage across borders. Even if our organization is essentially a domestic player—our suppliers, our customers and clients, our investors, our consultants may not be local."

Clearly, there is a tougher marketplace out there. So how does one brace for a surfeit of negative feedback—bad governance, impending recession, rising unemployment, galloping inflation, runaway population growth and their attendant social malaise? And, if you are a woman—how do you handle such a case of triple jeopardy—being in the wrong gender, time and place?

Place under the new sun

Women can now lead, manage, direct and participate in variable modes and manners—thank goodness for changing paradigms, if not attitudes vis-a-vis women who work outside the home. According to De Guzman, who mentors Master in Business Management (MBM) students, some 30 percent of whom are female, the changing workplace is yielding flat, empowered organizations where once stood pyramidal, authoritarian structures.

Values-driven organizations capable of deriving profit as well as non-profit alternatives for community well-being have learned how to meld talents, business success and social responsibility. The so called "de-jobbed" workplace is a field of opportunities where temporary hirees, part-timers, consultants and contractual workers enjoy output-oriented appointments. This has further led to a lifelong learning scenario where the once valued organizational loyalist whose "womb-to-tomb" services warranted a Rolex watch at retirement is being challenged by the no-less dedicated, reinvented multi-skilled and multi-tasked individual whose career resiliency is now considered a plus.

De Guzman further points out that "basic assumptions about the workforce, the workplace and work relationships are shifting and there is an abundance of inspiring visions of what is possible" in the 21st century.

"In the emerging paradigm, leaders and followers become partners, leadership gives way to stewardship, and service assumes dominance over self-interest." To illustrate, she cites a few contrasts:

OLD PARADIGM	NEW PARADIGM
Physical exertion	More mental and ideas generation
Routine	Creative
Chores must be done	Fun
Governed by job descriptions	Anchored on vision, mission, goals
Task/activities-based	Results/performance-oriented
Fixed	Mobile
Hierarchical	Egalitarian
Sweat shop	Automated; intelligent buildings; hotelling concept, sharing
Specialist	Multi-skilled
Directed	Empowered
Full-time	Part-time, contractual, temporary
Regular; permanent	Outsourcing; work-sharing

Those of us who are familiar with the 1001 hurdles that confront women in the workplace always need more reassurances on how truly leveled the playing field can get.

As early as the mid-80s, the move to break barriers confronting women in the business world, in government and civil society was initiated by the AIM under its Women Managers in Organizations Program with funding support from the Canadian International Development Agency. Nowadays, with a record breaking roster of empowered women in all sectors, e.g., two heads of state; a good number of feisty legislators, LGU executives, and bureaucrats; a smattering of women CEOs, and thousands of entrepreneurs, middle managers and workers at all levels of an organization and across fields of specialization—the demonstration effect should make life easier for the successor generations. For the girls to do, and the boys to accept that they can.

Funeral firms try shaking off debt hangover

NEW YORK—US funeral firms are hoping for a new lease on life.

Once championed by the investment community, the death care industry is still shaking off the financial hangover from a 1990s acquisition spree.

Saddled with debt, analysts said funeral firms are streamlining operations and have radically altered their accounting methods to better reflect when companies are actually paid, while trying to accommodate more savvy consumers.

Talk of a resurrection, though, may be premature and publicly traded companies in the industry have taken a beating.

"They are fighting desperately to de-leverage their balance sheets," said William Burns, a Johnson Rice death care analyst who retains a positive outlook on the industry.

"But before you can do that you've got to stabilize operations, pay down debt and look forward to 2002 maybe showing some actual growth in revenue and profit."

Market watchers say the fundamentals of the industry are sound: a non-cyclical business facing a consistent long-term death rate and an aging population. Americans purchase 2 million funerals, generating about $10 billion in annual revenue, according to a 1999 General Accounting Office report to Congress.

Yet investors have steered clear of death care.

Shares of Service Corp. International, the world's largest funeral firm, are way off the $38 it traded in 1999. On Wednesday its stock rose 42 cents to $4.55. Shares of rival Stewart Enterprises Inc., which traded as high as $29 in 1998, on Wednesday closed at $3-25/32.

Debt-heavy companies try to ease burden

Death care industry debt stems from the billions firms spent buying properties and cemeteries in the US and abroad after 1990. Caught up in an acquisition frenzy, many overpaid, and the No. 2 funeral home operator in North America, Loewen Group, filed for bankruptcy in November after collapsing under the weight of $2 billion in debt when an aggressive expansion scheme in the mid-1990s went awry.

"In hindsight we clearly paid too much for the some of businesses that we acquired and some of the business didn't match our consolidation model," said Tom Livengood, chief financial officer at Carriage Services Inc., a death care service company. "I don't think that is unique to us."

Carriage shares closed at $2.91, on Wednesday, down from a peak of $29 in January 1999. Shares of Loewen were delisted from the Toronto Stock Exchange as part of a reorganization.

Industry giant Service Corp., which operates more than 4,000 funeral homes and cemeteries in the United States, Europe and Australia, earlier this month said it would sell more than 500 cemeteries and funeral homes to help reduce its debt.

Service Corp. last year cut its debt by $908 million, or about 22 percent of its obligations, to $3.2 billion at the end of 2001, the company said.

Stewart Enterprises, based in Metairie, La., is also divesting interests. It reported $868.2 billion in long-term debt as of March 9.

"We are certainly considering the sale of our foreign operations. Obviously, we're in a non-acquisition environment so we're really watching our cash more carefully," Brian Marlowe, Stewart's chief operating officer, told Reuters.

Companies say they see turnaround

Death care debt is proving a deterrent for investors.

US funeral companies have a debt-to-equity ratio similar to computer giant International Business Machine Corp. at 0.9, according to Reuters analytics. Service Corp.'s ratio is 1.04; Stewart Enterprises and Carriage both have a ratio of 0.86.

Yet, while IBM has a price-to-book value of 8.6, investors are not willing to pay the same for death care companies. Service Corp. has a price-to-book value of 0.32, Carriage has 0.2 and Stewart 0.37.

"The debt is the great cloud, but for two reasons we'll get through it—companies are making progress, and the banks see this progress being made," said Johnson Rice analyst Burns.

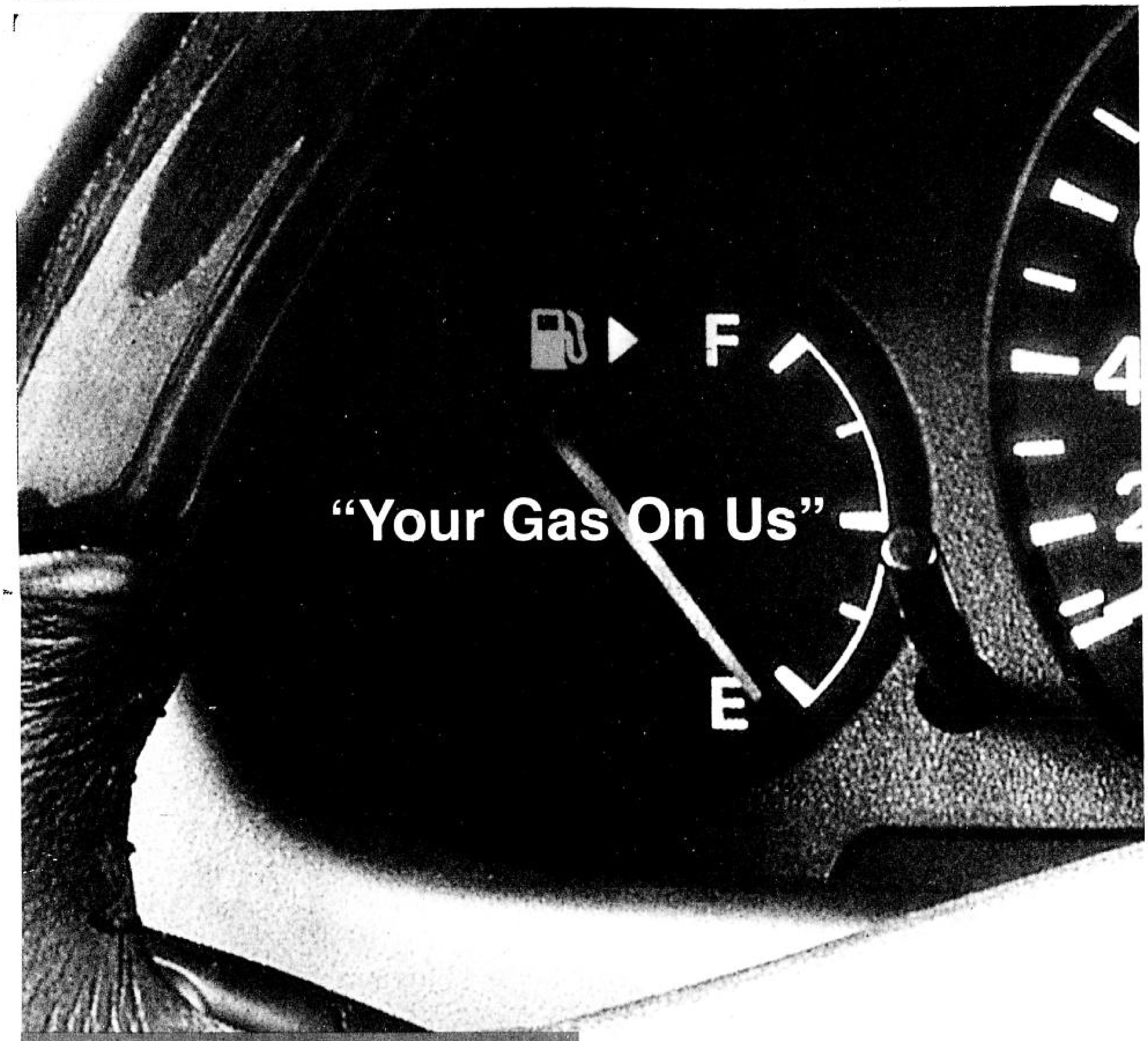
Bear Sterns analyst Jennifer Childe in a recent research report was less optimistic about Service Corp.'s plan to reduce debt by 20 to 35 percent to between $2 billion to $2.5 billion, mainly from asset sales, and to generate recurring free cash flow from operations of $200 million to $250 million.

"Most of the difference will stem from interest savings on a reduced debt load, but management is also embarking on various initiatives to improve its profitability. In our opinion, however, this cash flow growth could prove to be a stretch," Childe said.

At Carriage, one of the smaller funeral firms, executives said a restructuring program they implemented last year in part to help reduce debt will bring results.

"We expect to be able to return positive operating trends starting with the first quarter this year," CFO Livengood said.

In another effort to please investors, publicly traded funeral operators, which account for about 20 percent of the industry, have dramatically changed how they account revenues. *Reuters*



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Finnish firm to study RP texters to learn new phone applications

BY ANTHONY O. ALCANTARA

BEING the text messaging capital of the world has its benefits. For the Philippines, it could mean that the country is an ideal test bed for future technological developments for mobile communications services.

This is what Finnish telecommunications equipment supplier Nokia believes. In the next few months, the company will be conducting an exhaustive survey of how people use their phones and what possible applications would likely be popular.

Victor Saeijs, director for digital services for Nokia mobile phones Asia Pacific, says the survey aims to determine what people think about services or features such as sending pictures or even video clips through cell phones.

It would indeed be neat if you can just attach a digital camera to your phone while in Boracay, take pictures or video clips of yourself and "text" it to a friend who is toiling at work in Makati.

"I think a lot of Filipino users would like to use it. Filipinos are very warm people and communication is very important," says Saeijs.

"I think multimedia has a great potential. It's just to get the feel of people in Asian countries for these services in the next few months."

Considering that text messaging traffic in the Philippines is much bigger than that in Europe, Nokia is looking at text-based services much more than ever.

3G, which refers to a technological standard that will allow for transmission speeds necessary for bandwidth-exhaustive mobile video, has a host of possibilities usually attributed to James Bond movies.

However, 3G does not come cheap. In Europe, phone companies spent some $120 billion last year bidding for frequencies for this revolutionary technology.

With so much money spent for these frequencies, European mobile phone companies are now experiencing an increasing pressure for returns in the shortest possible time. Compared to Europe, Asian countries have much less funds to for such expensive ventures.

"I think a lot of Asian countries sensible in their approach to 3G, taking a much more practical approach.

I think they're trying to bring only relevant services," says Saeijs.

He cites as an example the I-mode of NTT DoCoMo of Japan where an ideal price point has been reached. He says practicality and affordability has made I-mode, which allows for easier mobile Internet access, a smashing hit.

With the popularity of ringing tones and virtual pets in the Philippines, Saeijs says Filipinos are very quick to adopt technology.

"Shopping, buying, paying are inherently mobile services. That's what we're looking at," he adds.

"A successful mobile service taps into primary consumer wants, real needs. It must be optimized for the mobile phone environment. It needs to be easy to use and attractive."

Because not many Filipinos or Asians have credit cards, mobile billing could be an alternative. Another potential gold mine is wireless gaming.

In the United States, wireless gaming is expected to become a $9-billion to $10-billion market in 2005 and people would pay more for gaming than for movies.

"What is needed? We need games developers and be able to attract casual gamers. There should also be stable platforms and security with higher bandwidth better games," Saeijs says.

Kalevi Kaartinen, vice president for 3G terminal sales, also believes that mobile phone companies' experiences in marketing and billing services will also help in determining what new services would click.

"I think revenues would first come from multimedia messaging and customized or personalized services," he says.

Since 3G is a nascent technology, he says it would be difficult to say how much mobile phone carriers in the country would have to spend for 3G.

"Return on investments would also be very difficult to determine because there are so many parameters," he says.

At present text-based services widely relate to general news and financial services. Jyrki Halttunen, vice president for mobile Internet applications for Nokia Networks Asia Pacific, says a survey of 57 operators of which 50 offer wireless Internet shows that 92 percent of the traffic relate to general news while 74 percent to financial services.

For him, services should be developed not only with messaging but also with helping people locate places through digital maps on their phones. Mobile commerce where people can do bank transactions or purchase goods is also a potential gold mine.

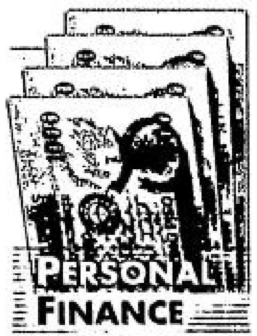
Filipinos also love to be entertained and they would most probably be enthusiastic about information about movies and music through their cell phones.

3G is expensive and will probably be several years away for the Philippines. However, depending on how fast Filipinos could adopt these new 3G services and the right pricing for these services by mobile phone companies, it may arrive sooner than most people think.

Filipinos must avoid the trap of buying high and selling low

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

MOSTLY averse to risk and somewhat greedy is a typical Filipino when it comes to investing. So when the opportunity comes to put in money in a worthwhile instrument, Juan dela Cruz ends up buying at a high and eventually selling at a loss.



It is a pity, according to Antonette de los Reyes, vice president and trust officer of Standard Chartered Bank that a lot of Filipinos fall into the trap of riding a bandwagon for a particular stock or any investment for that matter. And often catching the ride on its way down.

After the greed, fear sets in and scared of losing hard-earned money into an investment that appears to be going down the drain, Juan dela Cruz again does the expected and sells the instrument much, much lower than the price he bought it for.

De los Reyes points out that most Filipinos suffer from this investment flak because to begin with, the premise could be erroneous.

One makes an investment where he or she could generate regular income from or would lead to capital growth or better yet, both. This, says Stanchart's trust officer, should not be confused with instant gratification otherwise known as speculation.

An investment is always long term which means one is prepared to hang on to a stock, government security, bonds, and other debt papers for three to five years and not weeks nor months and definitely, not days.

Unlike speculation that relies much on timing or luck, an appropriate strategy to handle honest-to-goodness investment is diversification, says de los Reyes.

Of the pie, a cut should go to equities, a part to fixed-income, a portion to government securities. Geography and industry where these investments would be allocated is also part of the strategy.

"A common practice is not to put more than 15 percent of the portfolio in any area, sector, or location. Trust officers are a bit more liberal on the government securities since they offer less risks," said de los Reyes.

While risks are features of both speculation and investment, dangers in the latter are more manageable and could be tailored into a specific risk appetite of an investor.

DE LOS REYES: Here's the world.

Returns are more or less guaranteed in any long-term investment because of a diversified portfolio and the gains are definitely better than a time deposit, according to De los Reyes.

Last year, De los Reyes boasts that peso investments of Stanchart-managed portfolios realized average returns of 11 percent while dollar investments posted gains of 33 percent.

Hastily though, the Stanchart trust officer notes that "historical trends do not guarantee future returns."

De los Reyes further explained that returns are highly dependent on a client's risk profile.

Stanchart's good news, she says, is that it has developed a software that objectively evaluates an investor's risk profile and consequently, helps the client manages his or her investment.

Dubbed as the total money management solutions, the software could calculate any person's unique risk profile as well as how subsequent investments should be managed as objectively as possible.

"The tool also tells you if you are already short on savings, or long on fixed-income or securities. It tries to put emotions on the sidelines as much as possible," says De los Reyes.

Stanchart's trust department would manage individual accounts under what it calls the Personal Investment Plan Premier for a minimum investment of P1 million.

PIP Premier, says De los Reyes, is a fund management service that allocates personal and institutional funds in a combination of diversified investment of securities.

Those with less resources could join Stanchart's common trust fund for a minimum of P100,000. Under the CTF, ones investment is being managed lumped with other similar investments.

For any investment, Stanchart prescribes a rational approach which means emotions should be taken out of the situation and involves setting a realistic targets for your investments and reviewing your portfolio regularly.

The bank's investment strategies, says De los Reyes, is anchored on prudence, quality of securities, striking a balance between returns and risk, objectivity, and diversification.

"In Stanchart, we do not promise anybody the moon or the stars. But we can give you the world," said De los Reyes.

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Disney to cut 4,000 jobs

(From page C5)

The company's ABC Television network has struggled recently with a softening advertising market due to a general weakness in the economy. And analysts have been concerned that declining consumer confidence would hurt attendance at the company's theme parks.

"The news has been anticipated," Christopher Dixon, an analyst at UBS Warburg, said Tuesday. "There has been major concerns in the advertising market and Disney has been expanding. Disney has had an ongoing focus on cost cutting and is clearly using the current weakness in the marketing environment to trim some excess fat."

Disney announced the job cuts after the close of regular trading on the New York Stock Exchange, where it finished up $1.28 to close at $29.20.

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Pork for political perks

By Dennis M. Arroyo

TECHNO-JABBERS

THE OPPOSITE of pro is con. What then is the opposite of progress?

Jokes about Congress surface when talk turns to the topic of pork barrel funds.

Pork barrel refers to a powerful kitty of Congress. It's the money that funds projects in each legislator's district. So a new road or school building is not simply an infrastructure project of the national government.

It is marketed as the work of their representative. It's a gift from his good will.

Check out the billboards that advertise, "This is a public service project of Congressman so-and-so."

American word scholar William Safire explains the origin of the term pork barrel. Before the US Civil War, the masters would give their slaves salted pork stored in barrels.

A journalist wrote in 1919, "Oftentimes, the eagerness of the slaves would result in a rush upon the pork barrel, in which each would strive to grab as much as possible for himself. Members of Congress, in their rush to get their local appropriation items, behaved so much like Negro slaves rushing to the pork barrel."

The trouble with pork barrel is that general public funds are used for private interests. Infrastructure money is used for the reelection of the congressmen. Worse, politicians can use their discretion over the fund to get kickbacks.

There was a time when the national budget gave each senator P175 million and each congressman P50 million in pork barrel funds. The budget of more than P600 billion then contained almost P42 billion for pork.

This money was subject to certain conditions for its release: it had to go through "prior consultation" and "prior concurrence" by the members of Congress.

That was a dead giveaway that the legislators had their fingers deep in pork money. The words look harmless, but the set-up allows the congressman to select his projects and contractors. The contractors in turn can offer a cut to their patron.

The money raised by the politician is set aside for his reelection campaign in the future. The corruption cycle is then complete. Political power is used as a resource for economic gain. Funds raised from corrupt acts then pay for the extension of political power. Meanwhile, the poor suffer from under-paved roads, underpaid teachers, under-supplied health centers.

Such discretion over public funds follows the standard pattern of corruption in the Philippines. The Left calls this phenomenon "bureaucrat capitalism," while economists use the term "rent seeking." It's the same rotten banana.

The key to breaking the cycle is to limit the scope for political discretion. Congressmen should not be granted pork barrel funds. Rules must be transparent—the selection process must be as objective as possible, as in the case of open bidding. And the authorities must be willing to punish those caught in the net of corruption.

To keep food costs down, find someone else to buy them for you

T.G.I. Friday's director for operations Robert Santos, Italianni's director for operations Marissa de Jesus and Outback Steakhouse operating partner Ed de los Reyes.

OUTBACK Steakhouse operating partner Ed delos Reyes says that their obsession with quality is the reason why the three restaurants have not joined the price war which others have plunged into.

"If you live by the price, you die for the price. What we focus on is driving quality and value to give guests exceptional food and service." T.G.I. Friday's director for operations Robert Santos says that they try to achieve "a healthy mix of price and quality."

"Our burgers are priced from P175 and up. But they are huge ones which can be shared and come complete with a mound of french fries. What people don't know is that it takes a lot of time and effort to cook that burger. The dressing is made from scratch, the fries are imported. The price is worth every bite. That's quality."

Using imported and local goods

In an effort to bring down food costs without sacrificing quality, the three restaurants (which are all import-dependent), use an importer to purchase for them. This has helped rationalize warehouse, delivery and inventory costs.

Italianni's director for operations Marissa de Jesus says that while a lot of their products are imported, they have also started sourcing locally to further cut back on importation costs. Of course, all local products must first be approved by the parent companies.

There are some dishes, however, which cannot make use of local ingredients. Take steaks for instance. Outback uses only USDA and Australian beef from controlled feedlots. The cows are grain-fed under Outback's own feeding program to ensure that the meats are "Mad Cow" free.

Human resources

Emphasis on quality is carried over to the staff (Outback currently employs 120 people, Italianni's 130 and Friday's 550). Bistro hires people who know what good standards are, who have the dedication to stick by them and who have healthy work attitudes. They believe that attitude is as important as ability.

"Our staff takes so much pride in what they do. They take care of the restaurant as if it were their own. This results to a happy disposition, good service and that desire to please the guests," Delos Reyes, De Jesus and Santos say.

To keep the staff motivated, the three restaurants conduct regular training and implement incentive programs.

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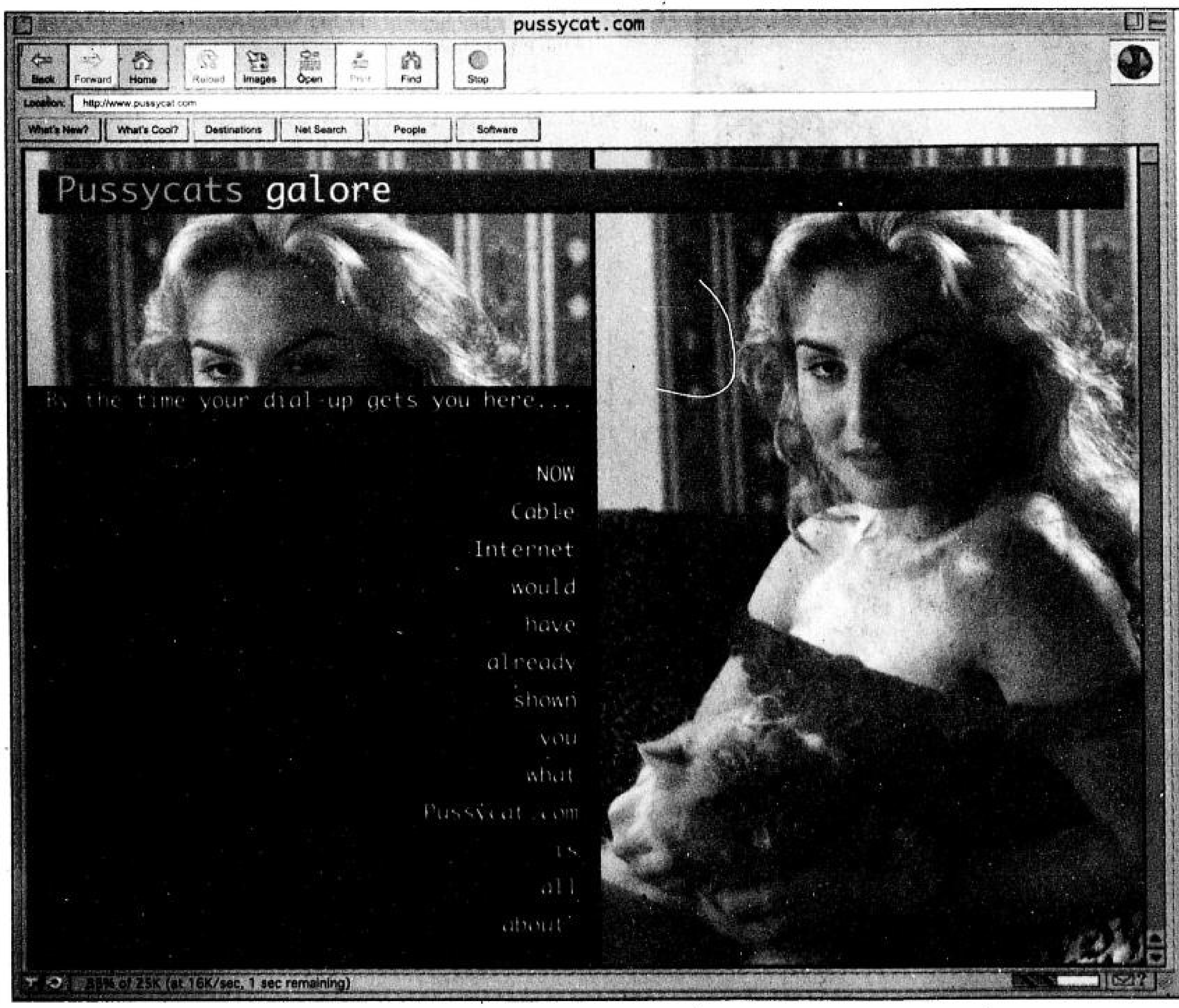
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Bank launches tool for complex cash management needs

FIRST Philippine Holdings president Nonoy Ibañez; Security Bank EVP Robert Lehman, AFP-RSBS president Cesar Jayme Jr. and Security Bank AVP-corporate bank Marlene Esguerra.

SECURITY Bank Corp., one of the low-key commercial banks in the country, has recently been taking an aggressive marketing and public relations stance. Its recent event was the launch of its newest product, Security DigiBanker, over cocktails at the Peninsula Manila. Security DigiBanker is the first fully Internet-based electronic banking suite designed for the complex cash management requirements of corporations.

Heading the celebration were Security Bank chair Frederick Dy and president Rafael Simpao Jr. The guest of honor for the evening was BSP Governor Rafael B. Buenaventura.

The event was overseen by Security Bank first vice president and head of its cash management division, Manny Narciso, and included a futuristic video presentation and high-tech raffle. Guests flocked to on-site computer terminals to witness a demonstration, keeping SBC assistant vice presidents XP Garcia and NM Amparo's hands full.

SBC corporate treasurer Ann Dy and executive vice president Robert Lehman were likewise occupied mingling with their guests.

The timing of the launch is meaningful as this year also marks Security Bank's 50th year of banking service.

IMI CFO Ned Goseco, INQUIRER chair Marixi Prieto, Security Bank corporate treasurer Ann Dy, BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura, Security Bank chair Frederick Dy, Marivic Rufino-Buenaventura and Security Bank president Rafael Simpao Jr.

WALTER Thompson CEO Mark Webster, Economist Int'l (Phils.) chief executive Peter Wallace and Security Bank EVP Robert Lehman.

SECURITY Bank first VP Manny Narciso, Security Bank chair Frederick Dy and Regis Partners managing partner Noel Bautista.

SECURITY Bank vice chair Paul Ung, Security Bank account officer Maverick Tan, Leslie Ung Sy-Facunda, Security Bank VP Elisa Go, Trans World Trading Co. Inc. VP-finance Dennis Gonzales and Primer Group of Companies president Jimmy Thai.

REPUBLIC Glass Holdings Corp. president Jerome Velasco Jr., Air Liquide Phils. Inc. president and CEO Woo Siew Wah, Air Liquide Phils. Inc VP Joffrey Manaid and Security Bank account officer Grace Viloria.

SECURITY Bank VP Lolet Mangilit, General Metal Corp. director/operations manager Armando Chua Jr., RD Fishing chair and president Rudy Rivera and General Metal Corp. president Armando Chua.

JDH Phils. general manager Leslie Stokes, JDH Phils. president Jess Dinglasan and Rustan's VP-finance Ed Carlos.

SECURITY Bank AVP XP Garcia (left) explains the DigiBanker to guests. Among them are Brent treasurer Charles Rappaport (2nd from right) and Air Liquide Phils. Inc. VP Joffrey Manaid (right).

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Cat-gas goes txt commerce

AS THE NUMBER of cellular phone subscribers in the country uncontrollably swells into millions, texting is emerging as one of the most potent ferm of mass media that can be effectively utilized not only for communication and entertainment, but for business as well.

Capitol Allied Trading and Transport, the producers of the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) brand CAT-Gas, is harnessing this new media as it launches its "U Txt CAT-Gas Delivers" program.

"U Txt CAT-Gas Delivers" is the brainchild of Jerome Gutierrez, CAT-Gas chief operating officer for Metro Manila, the Visayas, and Mindanao. Beginning this month, consumers can have their CAT-Gas LPG delivered right into their doorsteps and installed in their kitchen by texting (0917) 848-1777 for Globe and (0918)912-7777 for Smart subscribers.

"We all know how powerful texting has become and we believe in responsible texting. This is why we are using it as a medium to make LPG delivery even more convenient for very mobile professionals. They don't even have to spend on a phone call, they can just text and we'll take care of the rest," says Gutierrez.

Service representatives will guide customers through a three-step process which determines the name and address of the recipient, the preferred color of the tank, and other requests such as replacing the hose and regulator or free cleaning of their kitchen stove.

Gutierrez conceived of the "U Txt CAT-Gas Delivers" distribution program at the height of the second People Power revolution wherein text messaging played a crucial role in disseminating information.

"Since the mid-90s, e-commerce has been the buzz word. We see how e-commerce has made new millionaires in the US. Unfortunately, the number of people who use the Internet extensively is miniscule compared to the people who use the short message service of their cellular phones. This is why we have embarked on a parallel mode of transaction which is txt-commerce," observes Gutierrez.

According to an extensive in-house research conducted by CAT-Gas, the potential of txt-commerce hinges on two key factors: the increasing mobility of people, and the miniaturization of technology.

"You look around and you find that people are moving around more today than 10 years ago. This is the reason why the mobile phone industry is one of the fastest growing in the world," Gutierrez reveals.

The study also noted that today's cellular phones are increasingly becoming as full featured and that future technologies under development may make the mobile phones of the future as versatile as computers.

"The market penetration of cell phones right now far outnumbers the penetration of computers. With txt-commerce, there is no need to log on and there is a human touch to things because it is a trained customer service representative on the other end of the line and not just a server computer," explains Gutierrez.

"U Txt CAT-Gas Delivers" is another component of an aggressive campaign by CAT-Gas to facilitate the availability, accessibility and distribution of its products by opening alternative means of ordering for its consumers. Earlier last year, CAT-Gas introduced their Instant Delivery Hotline 920-7777 which is the country's first-ever free delivery and free installation of multi-colored tanks all over Metro Manila.

Here are a few of the successful ME Program participants…

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April 16 - June 15, 2001
Enrollment period:
April 1 - June 30, 2001
Start of classes:
July 9, 2001

For inquiries and additional information, please contact:
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Lolita Calero, Program Secretary

Col. Joseph R. McMicking Campus
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People, Events & Products

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Tapping the Internet to find missing children

MORE and more companies and enterprising individuals are finding ways to use the Internet to make the public aware of their products or services. Many are focusing their services to provide news and lifestyle information. Others make research efforts available on the Net, while others provide web pages for interaction of ideas. Others simply sell consumers products.

A group of young IT practitioners from Intergate Browser Systems, Inc., however, have found a new way to use the Net – a public service project to help distressed parents or guardians.

Intergate is a fast-growing, locally based integrator that provides search solutions in knowledge management systems. Intergate's young, innovative and committed IT experts have pooled their talents to create sagipbata.com, a new web page to find missing children.

In elevating the use of the computer for a noble cause, the Intergate staff has designed a web page which is aimed at helping disseminate information in a faster and more efficient way to locate missing children.

Intergate intends to help missing children 18 years and below reported missing by family members or guardians, and runaways picked up by the police on the streets, malls, and other public places.

Sagipbata.com is an information center for missing children where photos and details of missing children will be posted for viewing in the Internet daily on a 24-hour basis.

Information on sagipbata.com may be printed for hard copy reference, while posters/fliers may also be produced for public posting and distribution.

Intergate is co-sponsoring sagipbata.com with the Philippine National Police (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and the Presidential Anti-organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF).

PARTNERS FOR INDIA

FedEx's national sales manager, Genaro Reyes (middle left) shakes hands with Rahul Chhabra, first secretary of the Indian Embassy in the Philippines, after FedEx accepted over 3 thousand kilos of relief goods collected by the Indian community for the earthquake victims in India. The donations were shipped directly from FedEx's hub in Subic Bay to Gudjarat, India. FedEx currently serves more than 30 countries and territories in the Asia Pacific region with over 6,300 employees. The company provides the most extensive trans-Pacific airlift of any major competitor. Operating its own wide-bodied MD-11, DC-10 and A310 aircraft, FedEx offers over 260 flights per week to Bangkok, Beijing, Cebu, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kaohsiung, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Osaka, Penang, Seoul, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Singapore, Subic Bay, Sydney, Taipei and Tokyo, as well as to destinations in the United States.

CANDIDACIES FILED

Lions district governor for 301-D2, Johnny T. Co Jr., PJMF (center) raises the hands of Lion candidates Alejo "Alex" Dumrique, MJF (third from left) and Susan De la Vina Brizuela, PJMF, for the position of district governor and vice district governor of 301-D2 for LY2001-2002. The affair was celebrated at the Lions district office at Bernardo Park, Quezon City during the filing of candidacy. Shown in photo, from left, are Lady Nitz Dumrique, PDG Wilfredo "Sol" Flores, cabinet secretary Chito Dimaculangan and PDG Manuel Padolina.

IBM, Siebel Systems increase call centers' productivity

IBM announced that it has teamed with Siebel Systems, Inc., the world's leading provider of e-business applications software, to increase productivity of call centers by integrating IBM's content manager V7.1 with Siebel Call Center Version 6.

The validated integration provides a comprehensive e-business solution that enables customer service representative (CSRs) to quickly access digital versions of customer interactions conducted over multiple channels, including Web, telephone, fax, e-mail, and interactive voice response (IVR) systems. The Siebel Validation Program evaluates and documents integrated third-party solutions by putting them through rigorous technical scrutiny to ensure the highest levels of interoperability and customer satisfaction.

The IBM Content Management/CRM Services Offering can cut response times and increase productivity at customer call centers by enabling call center representatives to access customer bills, correspondences and transactions regardless of the format in which they originated.

"Customer relationships are the lifeblood for every organization," said Andrew Warzecha, vice president of Meta Group. "Individuals that support clients, or clients doing self-service must have access to all of the information they need to quickly respond to customer questions and concerns. This means building systems that can aggregate the relevant content into a dynamic virtual client folder regardless of whether the source is e-mail, images, Microsoft Word Documents, CRM notes, reports or database. The customer support bar is continuously being raised, and those organizations that can exceed client expectations will dominate their markets over the long term."

IBM is the world's largest information technology company, with 80 years of leadership in helping businesses innovate. The fastest way to get more information about IBM software is through its home page at www.software.ibm.com. Siebel Systems, Inc. (Nasdaq: SEBL) is the world's leading provider of e-business applications software. For more information, visit Siebel Systems' website www.Siebel.com.

New laser technology for better vision

MAKATI Eye Laser Center, touted as the Philippines' leading facility for refractive surgery, announced that the European "wavefront technology" for refractive laser surgery is now in the country.

The center is combining its expertise and experience with Wavefront Inc., an organization composed of Filipino ophthalmologists who underwent extensive training in the field of refractive surgery with the common objective of "providing Filipinos from all walks of life the opportunity for unaided and better vision.

Makati Eye Laser Center said that the German-made wavefront technology is in demand by eye laser centers specializing in refractive surgery worldwide.

The center also explained that wavefront technology represents "the highest evolutionary step in the field of eye laser surgery for the correction of all errors of refraction," allowing for safer and more efficient treatment of errors of refraction which could not be done before.

It also pointed out that the wavefront technology has been made possible by two state-of-the-art excimer lasers: the Bausch and Lomb Zywave aberrometer and the Bausch and Lomb Technolas 217 "z" (Zyoptix) excimer laser, touted as the newest and most thoroughly tested wavefront technology available today.

Makati Eye Laser Center, accredited by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine Health Insurance Commission, introduced to the country the "flying spot and tracker technology" in refractive laser surgery in 1997. Some 10,000 procedures have been performed to treat nearsightedness, astigmatism and farsightedness.

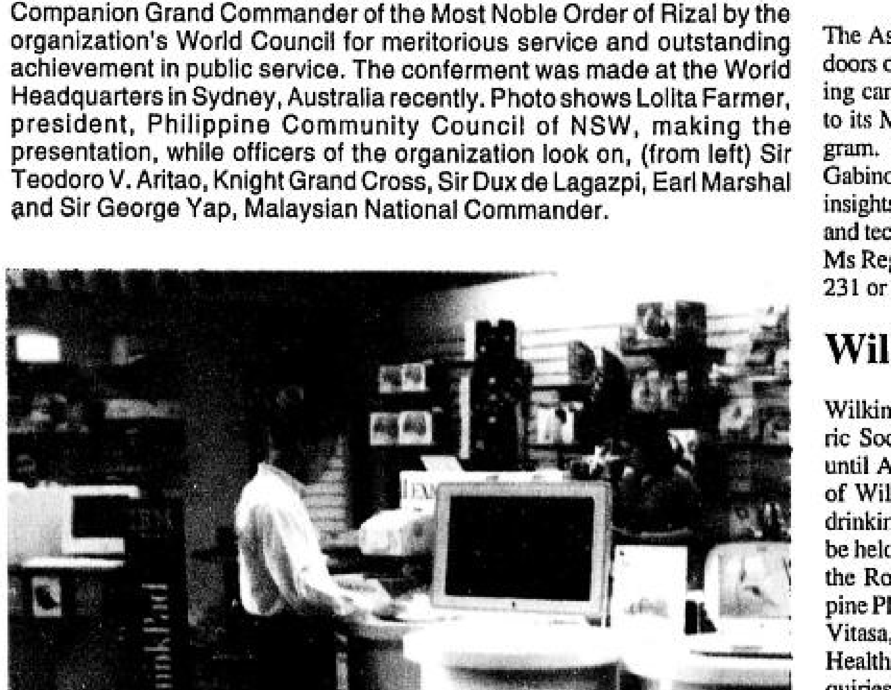
Makati Eye Laser Center is located at the ground floor of Alegria Building, 2229 Pasong Tamo, Makati City. For more information call 813-0343/893-1152/816-0602.

GLOBE TAPS CEM FOR GTAAA TESTING

Globe Telecom has tapped the Center for Educational Measurement (CEM) to administer the high school testing of the 6th Globe Telecom Academic Achievement Awards (GTAAA). CEM will conduct the testing to the 430 high school qualifiers from the Department of Education Culture and Sports-endorsed schools in the country, 19 of whom will emerge as high school area awardees. Sealing the partnership with a handshake are Globe Telecom AVP for public relations Jones Campos and CEM director for centralized testing program Esperanza Buen. With them are, from left, Globe Telecom community relations assistant Steve Piczon, CEM program assistant Noreen Manzano, CEM program assistant Wilma Coprado and CEM program officer Lea Dabalos.

LEVISTE CONFERRED KNIGHT

BOI Governor J. Antonio Leviste was conferred the rank of Knight Companion Grand Commander of the Most Noble Order of Rizal by the organization's World Council for meritorious service and outstanding achievement in public service. The conferment was made at the World Headquarters in Sydney, Australia recently. Photo shows Lolita Farmer, president, Philippine Community Council of NSW, making the presentation, while officers of the organization look on, (from left) Sir Teodoro V. Aritao, Knight Grand Cross, Sir Dux de Lagazpi, Earl Marshal and Sir George Yap, Malaysian National Commander.



ELECTRONICS DEPOT OPENS

The opening of Electronics Depot along Libis, Quezon City puts a friendly face—and a friendly price—to the digital age. Electronics Depot packs the best brands and state of the art technology all under one roof. From home stereo setups and flat-screen and projection TVs, to the most advanced home theater systems and professional sounds and lights gear. From computers and peripherals to digital video games, mobile phones and personal digital assistants, Electronics Depot has it. But perhaps the most breathtaking advance Electronics Depot can be proud of is its breakthrough prices.

BITS & Clips

IT giants in Scalability Roadshow

Six leading companies in the Information Technology industry converge in the Scalability Roadshow Asia 2001 at the Manila Peninsula Hotel, Makati City today, April 2. The first-of-its-kind event brings together Microsoft, Intel, Unisys, SAP, Siebel Systems and Commerce One to present the latest developments in three breakthrough IT innovations: Windows 2000 technology, Intel Architecture (IA), and Unisys e-@action Enterprise Server ES7000.

AIM open house on MBM program

The Asian Institute of Management (AIM) opens its doors on Tuesday, April 3 at 4:30 p.m. to brief aspiring candidates on the requisites and perks attendant to its Master in Business Management (MBM) program. Former AIM president and dean Professor Gabino A. Mendoza will lead a panel who will give insights on contemporary business management trends and technologies. For further information, please call Ms Reggie Santos or Rona Sialonga at 892-4011 loc. 231 or 235, or fax 893-4595.

Wilkins in PPSI confab

Wilkins Distilled Water joins the Philippine Pediatric Society, Inc.'s 38th annual convention ongoing until April 4 at the Westin Philippine Plaza. As part of Wilkins' commitment to promote pure and safe drinking water among households, a symposium will be held on April 3, Tuesday, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Romblon/Mindoro rooms of the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel. Guest speaker will be Dr. Benjamin Vitasa, professor and dean at the College of Public Health, University of the Philippines-Manila. For inquiries call Executive Decisions at 413-6436/37.

HP 'summer heatwave' promo

Hewlett-Packard's "HP InkJet Setter Asian Summer Heatwave" promo is ongoing. Every purchase of original HP ink cartridge models c1823a, 51625a, 51626a, 51629a and c6615a entitles the buyer to join the raffle for a chance to win trips for two to Asian destinations. To join, write name, signature and complete contact details on the inner side of the HP inkjet print cartridge box specially marked with the promo sticker seal. Place the box inside a brown envelope and drop in any of the promo drop boxes in all National Bookstore branches and selected HP dealers. The nationwide grand draw will be held on April 9. Deadline for submission of entries is on Tuesday, April 3.

MAYOR'S RECOGNITION

La Funeraria Paz, Inc. received a plaque of appreciation from Quezon City mayor Ismael A. Mathay, Jr. In recognition of its support to Task Force Payatas and the victims and families of the Payatas landslide July last year. Shown above are the LFPI-Payatas Rescue Team receiving the plaque from Mayor Mathay and the Quezon City social services development department staff headed by Ma. Teresa M. Mariano.

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OIL PASTEL PAINTING CONTEST

Recently concluded Feb. 24 at the Federation Center in Binondo, Manila was the first-ever on-the-spot oil pastel painting contest by Pentel and sponsored by Central Bookstore Inc. Shown above are the winners together with the executives of Central Bokstore Inc., the exclusive distributor of Pentel markers, ballpens and art materials here in the Philippines. Standing from left: assistant vice president for marketing Philip Tan; grade school category winners Patrick Andrew Tanhuanco (third place, St. Stephen's High School), Jason Sim (second place, Chiang Kai Shek College), Jeane Renee Nubla (first place, Philippine San Bin School); high school category winners Joezel Rizi Nubla (first place, Philippine Cultural High School), Joubert Tan (second place, Philippine Academy of Sakya), Howard Enimedez (third place, Chiang Kai Shek College) and Central Bookstore Inc. president Henry Lim Bon Liong. Also in photo are judges Kimberly and Kristel Lim. Central Bookstore Inc. is a member of the Sterling Paper Group of Companies.

MELLOW TOUCH AND THE CANINES

The recent premiere of Disney's "102 Dalmatians" was recently celebrated with a dog show at the Robinsons Place Manila dubbed "Spend A Dog-Day Afternoon." The show was hosted by FM station DWLL/Mellow Touch 94.7, Buena Vista International and Robinsons Malls. Highlighting the show was a dog parade inside the mall followed by various canine tricks and competition. In photo are dogs of popular breeds that joined the activity with their respective trainers from the Canine Trainors Council. Disney's "102 Dalmatians" features the comeback of Cruella De Vil as played by multi-talented Glenn Close.

Primer

(From page C12)

bills, draining purchasing power in the States. Spending on major items like cars has also plunged. Savings rates are stagnant at near-zero, because of the earlier spending binge. Credit card debt is quite high.

The accounts show that corporate profits are declining. Industries like telecommunications are slashing their investments. In fact some airline and steel corporations have folded up.

- What's being done to prevent a US recession?

US President George W. Bush has proposed a tax cut to stimulate consumer spending. The trouble with a tax cut, though, is that it takes time to pass such legislation. It may come too late.

Another means is to lower interest rates, as this encourages more spending among firms and families. Bank loans become more affordable, prodding companies to invest more in their equipment and parents to start buying the new car or house.

The US Federal Reserve cut interest rates by half a percentage point last January. It normally adjusts rates a fourth of a point during its monthly meetings. The last time the Fed cut rates by half a point was during the emergency meeting when the Russian economy was in flames in September 1998.

"When the Federal Reserve Board has an emergency meeting and cuts rates by half a percentage point . . it's a signal that something dramatic is happening," says Lester Thurow, chair of the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). *(Comments to <dmarroyo@hotmail.com)*

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Promo Period: March 15 - October 30, 2001

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3M PP2500 Plain Paper Copier Transparency Film	A size (215mm x 279 mm), 50 shts	50
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3M CG3460 Ink Jet Transparency Films	A size (215mm x 279 mm), 50 shts A4 size (210mm x 297mm), 50 shts	50
3M CG3480 Ink Jet Transparency Films	A size (215mm x 279 mm), 50 shts A4 size (210mm x 297mm), 50 shts	50
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2. Below are the premium items and their corresponding points

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2. 3M Nomad Dirt Trap	300
3. 3D Turbo Fan	800
4. Braun Coffee Maker	1,200
5. Kodak Camera	1,600

PREMIUM ITEMS	POINTS
6. Whirlpool Microwave	3,300
7. HP Printer	4,500
8. Aiwa Micro Components	5,200
9. Nokia 3310 Cellphone	6,500
10. Palm Pilot M100	8,100
11. National Refrigerator (7 cu ft) 0.21m³	8,900

3. The premium items shall be redeemed at the following redemption outlets:

* 3M Makati Office
c/o Ben Mercado / [illegible]
18/F PCI Bank Tower 2, Makati Avenue, Makati City

Note:
a. Large items/high-value items shall be released two weeks after filing of redemption form and the date of claiming shall be indicated in the redemption form.
b. Claim stub shall be given to the customer as proof of redemption which shall be presented when claiming large/high-value prizes.
c. When claiming, present the transparency film boxes with the corresponding point sticker.
d. Claims from GMA, Northern/Southern Luzon shall be redeemed from Makati office.

* 3M Cebu Office
c/o [illegible]
Units 503 - 504 Ayala Life FGU Bldg., Cebu Business Park, Mindanao Avenue, Cebu City 6000

Note: Claims from Iloilo, Bacolod and other Visayas areas shall be shipped from Cebu office.

* 3M Davao Office
c/o Jane Ong - Janet Apique
Door 3, Blucor Building, Insular Village, Lanang, Davao City

Note: Claims from Cagayan de Oro, General Santos and other Mindanao areas shall be shipped from Davao office.

* 3M Authorized Visual Systems Distributors

Note: Shipping costs for Vismin shall be paid by 3M Philippines.

4. Redemption period shall be until 60 days from end of promo period.

5. Employees of 3M Philippines, its authorized distributors and participating outlets including their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.

6. Customer shall surrender product boxes with corresponding rewards sticker and shall accomplish the redemption form when claiming prizes.

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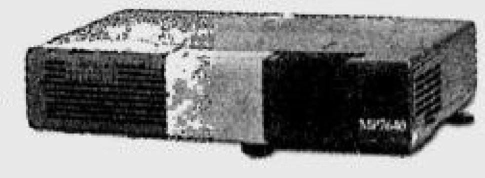

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3M Innovation

Primer on the US economic slowdown

By Dennis M. Arroyo

AFTER going through its longest expansion in history, the American economy is poised for a recession in the first half of 2001. That was the prediction of Stephen Roach, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter's chief economist. He said that gross domestic product would probably contract by 1.25 percent during the first semester.

Here's a primer on the contraction I have put together from various sources.

- Why should I care about it when America is so far away?

Because it's starting to impact on the Philippine economy. And things can get worse if the slowdown becomes a full-blown recession.

According to the Asian Development Bank, the Philippine economy will not meet the government's growth targets because of the American slowdown. Malacañang has set a target of 3.8 to 4.3 percent growth in the gross domestic product, but the ADB expects a rate of 3.1 percent for the year.

The main factor is the high dependence of Philippine exports on the US market. In 1999, export growth hit 18.6 percent, but in 2000, it was 8.7 percent.

- What's a recession in the first place, and why is this one different?

A recession is defined as two successive quarters or six months of falling national output. The economy contracts for a semester.

In each of America's past three recessions, Japan countered with her own boom. Then when Japan slipped in 1998, the American economy surged. However, recent growth around the world has been highly dependent on exports to the United States. Worse, growth is slowing in Europe and remains stagnant in Japan.

This is the first time since 1974 that both American and Japanese economies are down. The fact is, the United States and Japan make up 46 percent of the world's total production.

- Can the slowdown spread to the rest of the world?

A huge problem arises if the US recession lasts years instead of a quick semester. It would throw cold water on the Asian recovery and even result in a global recession.

"We're the locomotive, so, if the locomotive stops, the rest of the train stops, too," said Peter Morici, an economist at the Economic Strategy Institute, a Washington think tank. "It could have negative consequences not just economically, but politically and socially, in Latin America and Asia."

"The US is 25 percent of the world's economic pie," adds Jay Bryson, an international economist at First Union Corp. in Charlotte, North Carolina. "If that slows down, the rest of the world is going to feel it."

- How does a recession spread?

When America's economy contracts, so do exports from the rest of the world.

Some countries will be harder hit than others. The nations of Europe tend to trade among themselves, so the effect will be minimal. More vulnerable are the Latin American countries, especially Mexico.

Asian nations, particularly the exporters of hi-tech equipment and software, are also in trouble. In South Korea, exports make up 49 percent of the nation's gross domestic product. The top exports of the Philippines are software and electronic components.

Another transmission mechanism is the stock market. Panic in Wall Street feeds fear in Tokyo, London and Manila. Dotcoms came crashing in the United States, leading global stock markets to burn almost $10 trillion in 2000.

- What are the signs that the United States is approaching recession?

One can cite the long-drawn weakness in manufacturing, a fall in stock prices, rising unemployment and falling consumer confidence. "All of that together to me is a classic sign of the US economy that has now moved into recession," economist Roach adds.

The extra-cold winter and higher oil prices have pushed up energy

PRIMER/ C11

Software tools help protect online privacy as threats mount

LOS ANGELES—Bob Myman has stopped buying things over the Internet.

The 50-year-old entertainment lawyer has good reason: His credit card number was posted online in December by hackers who broke into a Los Angeles-based credit card processing company.

"The protection levels aren't there yet," said Myman. "I'm not comfortable about the Internet."

Myman is worried not just about Net security but also about the online harvesting of Web surfers' data. He's far from alone.

A UCLA study last fall found that nearly two-thirds of Internet users think people who venture online put their privacy at risk.

The fear is not just of identity theft, but also of third-party Internet "cookie" files.

Many websites—or more accurately advertisements posted to those sites by third parties—place such files on visitors' computer hard drives and use them to acquire useful marketing intelligence.

Web bugs can be even more invasive. They are little pieces of Web code used mostly to track people's online behavior. Bugs can, however, be written to reach across the Internet into unprotected computers and steal files.

Myman doesn't know much about Web bugs and cookies—but says he knows enough to be thinking about shielding himself from them.

For that, he can turn to a growing array of privacy-enhancing products designed to make Web-surfing anonymous.

One of the most popular is "Freedom" from Zero-Knowledge Systems Inc. It protects by routing data through the Montreal-based company's network servers, which strip off identifying information about users before sending the data to a website.

By masking the numerical Internet address that identifies a user's computer, websites are prevented from tracking the user, who effectively surfs under an alias.

"We give users tools to protect their privacy but those tools also allow them to choose to disclose more information to those who they trust," said Austin Hill, a co-founder and chief strategist of Zero-Knowledge.

If a Freedom user decides to make a purchase, they can "unmask" themselves.

Dozens of other privacy protection products exist, including Privada, Anonymizer, IDzap and Somebody. Typically, they offer anonymous surfing and multiple aliases as well as cookie management; some cookies are desirable, like the one from your bank or online broker that remembers your password.

About a half dozen privacy products block banner ads and some are effective against Web bugs, says Richard Smith, chief technologist of the Denver-based Privacy Foundation.

Web bugs can be fairly innocuous, providing advertisers with data on who is visiting a website. Or they can be intrusive, passing information that surfers enter into online registration forms to advertisers or marketers, said Smith.

Web bugs need cookies to function.

Tommy Wang, director of the Pittsburgh security startup Intelytics, says about 85 percent will set a cookie on an unprotected surfer's computer. *AP*

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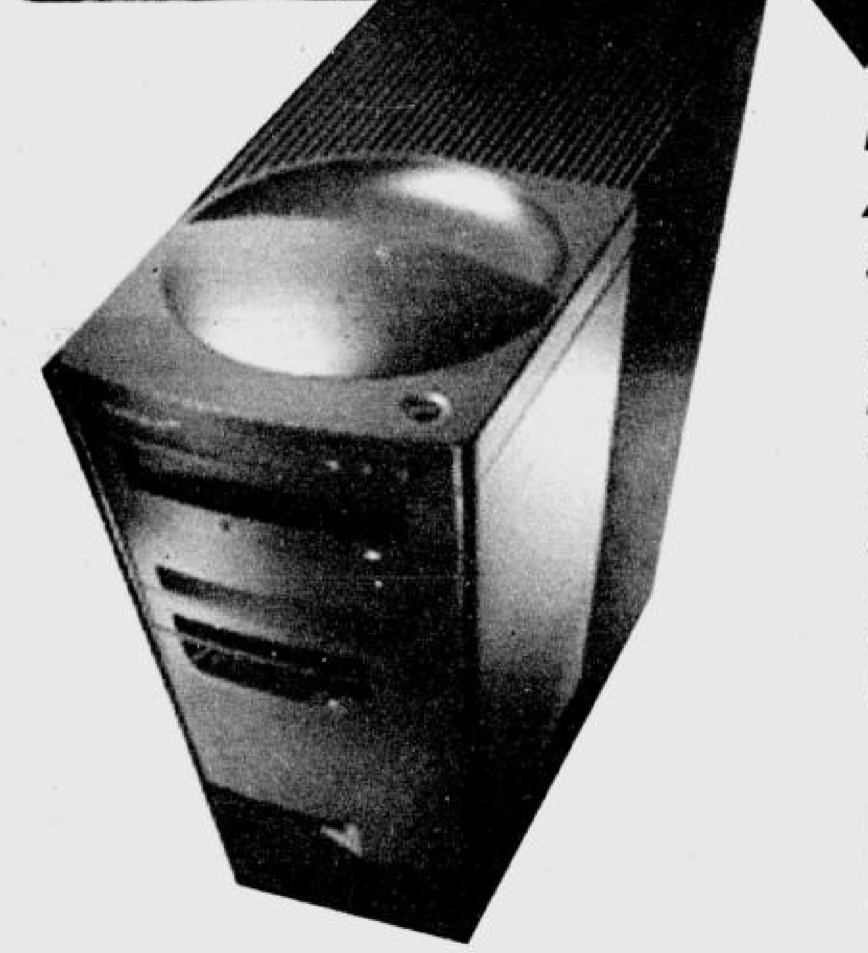

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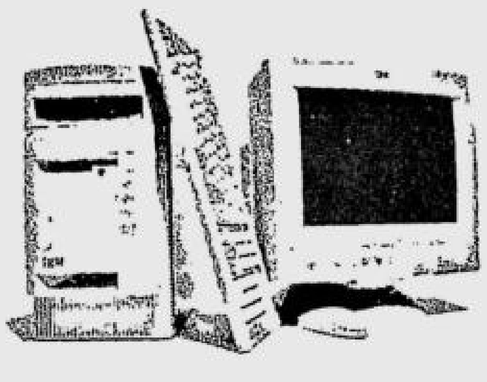

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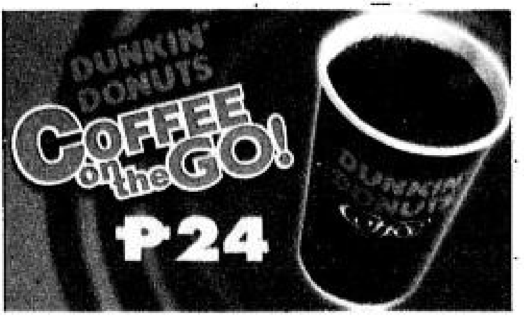

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Fashion Walk

Venice's famous pre-Lenten festival shows that heritage conservation is nothing without the preservation of traditions

ANYTHING GOES DURING CARNEVALE: Plumed medieval signore and signori share center stage in Venice with Pokémon figures as the air of the entire city flies into another realm the night before Ash Wednesday.

Altered reality during Carnevale in Venice

IN SPITE of its strong links to history, Venice shows that a heritage city is not a mere monument to the past and that life thrives within it with strong 21st-century vibrations. Carnevale, the annual pre-Lenten festival, bends reality in Venice, altering its historic aura with revelry and a walking feast of costumed fantasies. Carnevale shows that the preservation of old cities is empty without the continuation of its traditions.

SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

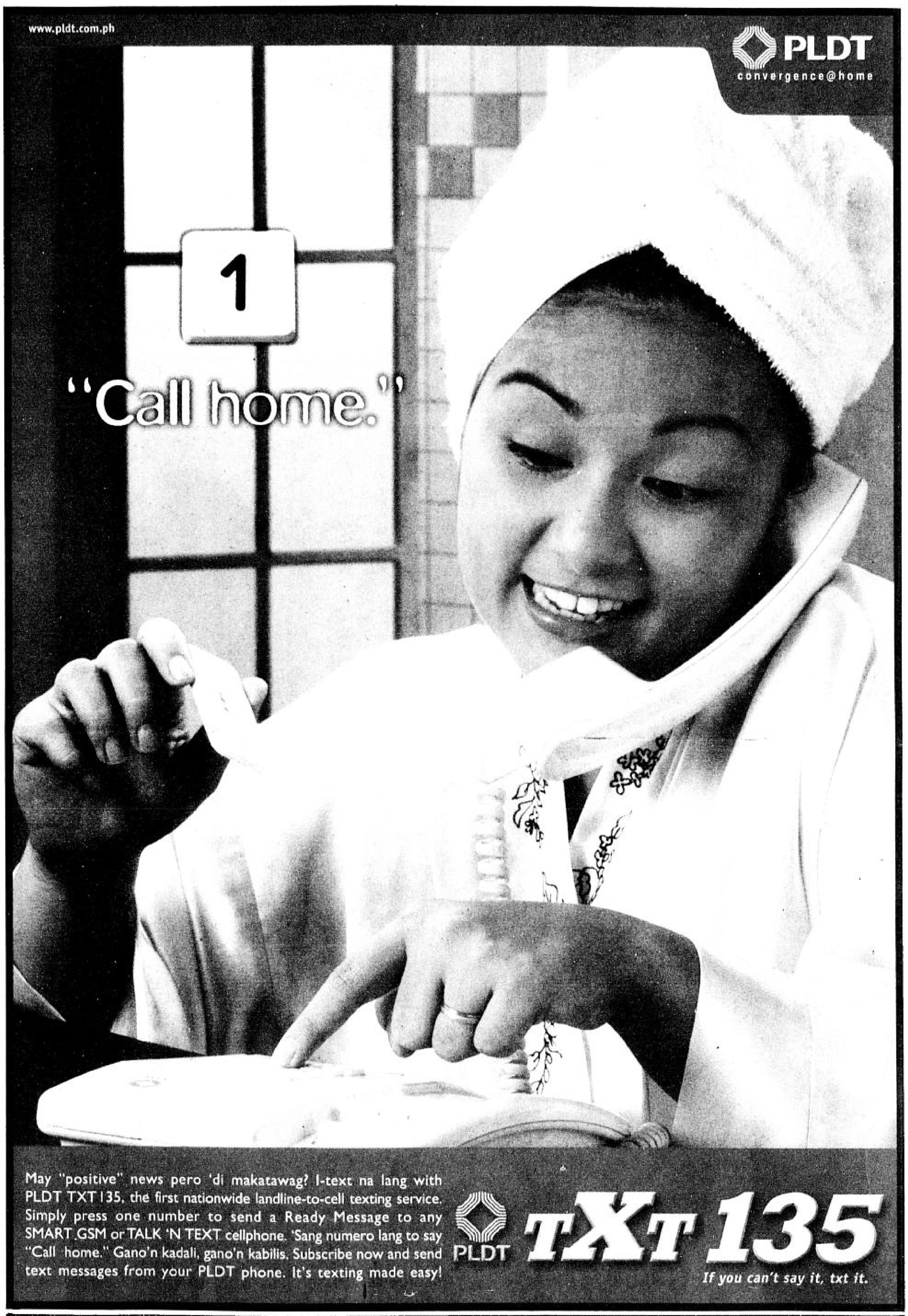
Dara Villonco, who studies in Florence, went to Venice during Carnevale and saw how the festival transforms a historic city. Her letter is one of the few exceptional ones I have received in a long while, and it deserves to be shared.

"I went to Venice and all I have to say is this: Carnevale in Venice is an experience and a half! It was such a magical weekend that I don't think I'll ever be able to describe everything I saw and felt.

"Anyway, the train ride from Florence is relatively smooth. Looking at the view of the countryside from the window is so relaxing. I see vast tracts of land sweeping past with the occasional isolated farmhouse dotting the green fields. Trees surround some farmhouses, making the houses look as if hidden by a lace-pattern screen made of dried inter-twined branches. It is eerily enchanting during winter and spring, so you can only imagine what it looks like in summer when you probably won't even see the house because it will be in the middle of a dense patch of green forest in the middle of nowhere. The vineyards and olive orchards are bare, grape vines and silver-tipped olive branches are stripped of their leaves and fruit, but your mind just cannot help but imagine what it looks like filled with green leaves during the summer.

"We arrive in Venice. Every time I step out of that train station, I feel like I am on a movie set. The sight that greets you when you pass through those glass doors is enthralling—it just knocks the wind right out of you. The sight of the water, the boats, the buildings makes time cease to exist, transporting you to another world. The city is just the perfect setting for a fairy tale. You half expect seeing gold-leafed, horse-drawn carriages and angels floating down from the sky. It also doesn't help it is Carnevale and you

ALTERED/ p.D6



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- Press 6 for "Please come home early"
- Press 7 for "Please don't forget my bilin! Thanks."
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- Press 9 for "Sorry, I can't make it"
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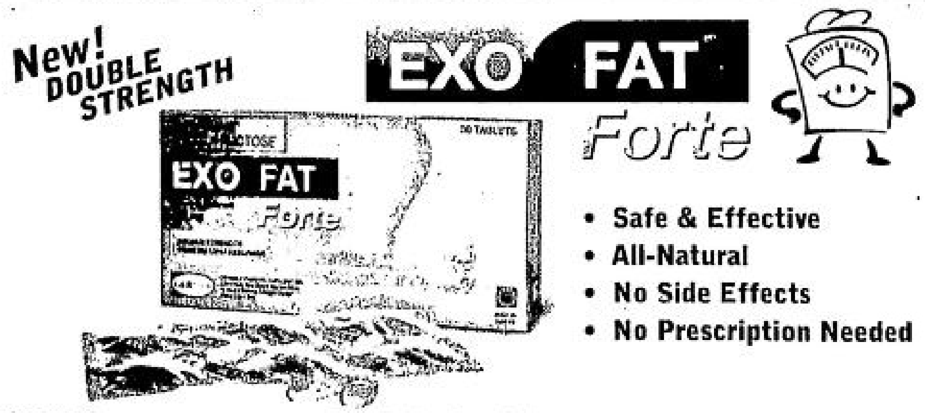

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Palomar at Clark Museum; Malang at Metropolitan; Leano at Lopez Museum

VISUAL ARTS

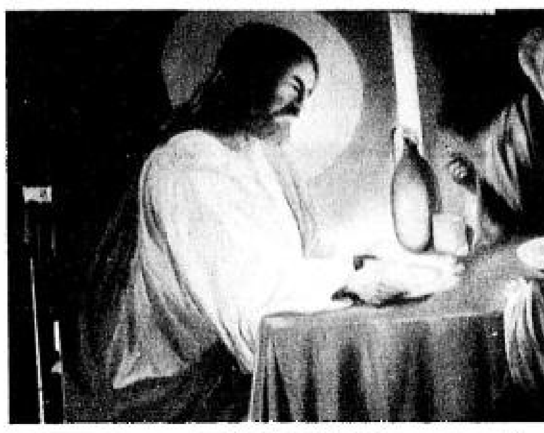
PARIS-BASED Filipino performance artist Sandra Palomar will hold a show at the Clark Museum in the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga on April 2-6. Palomar will present an hour-long three-part performance piece dubbed "Harana 9," a combination of Chinese-derived sculpture, European songs and a shelter from indigenously available materials.

Palomar conceptualized "Harana" as a performance that "speaks more directly of my Filipino experience" in January 1996, after an intensive workshop with performance artist Marina Abramovic, who was known for her contributions to the establishment of performance as a current and alternative art form in the '70s. Since then Palomar has rendered eight performances of "Harana," with each show happening in a different space and for a different public. "Harana" has been presented in various cities of France such as Paris, Nantes and Avignon, as well as in Berlin, New York, Helsinki, Zurich and Manila.

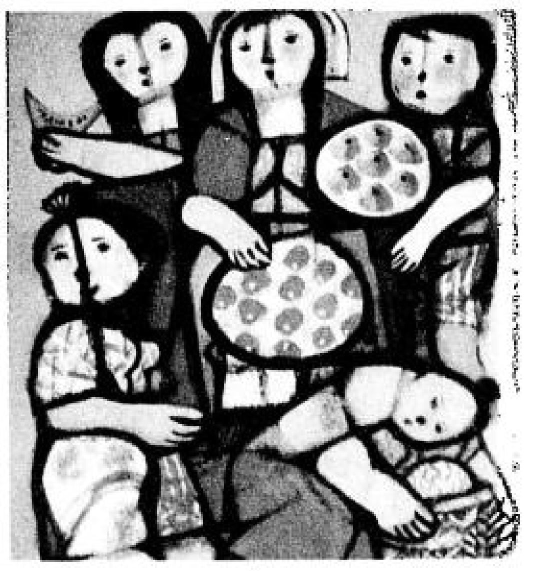
The Clark Museum is located on Sergio Osmeña Street, Clark Special Economic Zone, Pampanga. Call (045) 599-2832 and 861-0922, or e-mail mayette@email.com.

MALANG AT MET GALLERY. After successful back-to-back shows at the start of the year, Malang isn't about to let up. In "Recent Works," on view at the Metropolitan Art Gallery (Artwalk, 4/L SM Megamall Building A) until April 15, Malang goes back to painting women in a manner he could truly call his own. Call 637-8387.

LEANO AT THE LOPEZ MUSEUM. Artist Tony Leano's exhibit dubbed "White" is on view at the Lopez Museum Shop, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell starting April 7. Leano continues to focus on a more minimalist orientation: His works are meditative and experiential in nature. Call 898-0981.



"BREAKING of the Bread at Emmaus" by Bicolano artist Elmer Sergio has been displayed at Our Lady of the Visitation Church in Caloocan City and at the Ascension of Our Lord Church, QC.



"FRUIT Vendor" by Malang, on view at the Metropolitan Art Gallery until April 15

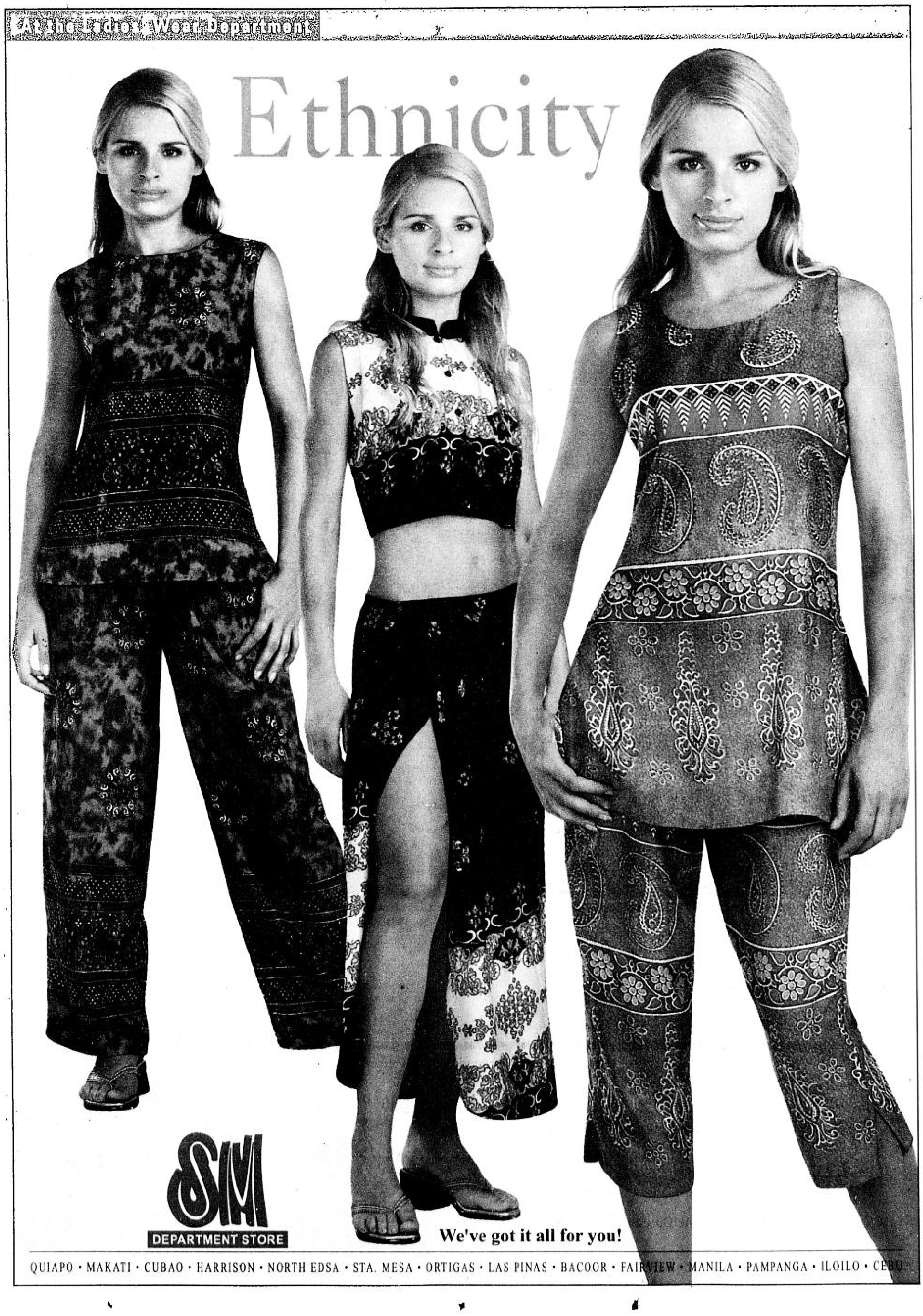
MALLARI AT THE DRAWING ROOM. Mark Mallari presents "Abstract Reality" from April 7-25 at the Drawing Room, Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City. Call 897-6990/7877.

HIRONAKA AT MA'I ROOM. Cheryl Villanueva-Hironaka will open her fifth one-woman show on April 4 at the Ma'I Room of the Ayala Museum. Dubbed "Alternative Space," the exhibit showcases paintings done in acrylic and modeling paste on paper and canvas as well as original furniture crafted with wrought-iron fabric and mirror. Until April 14. Call 812-1191 to 97 local 106.

FILIPINO GLASS ARTIST. Noell El Farol, recipient of 2001 Artist in Residency In Seto, Japan, is currently representing the Philippines in an exhibit of glassworks and ceramics at the Seto City Cultural Center, Aichi-Ken, Japan until April 10.

'TUBIG KULAY' AT THE HERITAGE GALLERY. The Heritage Gallery presents the ninth exhibition of Tubig Kulay dubbed "On-the-Spot Paintings." The group is composed of 11 artists—Solomon Saprid, Fred Buhay, Romy Jocson, Rey Reyes, Cherry Pasicolan, Mario Panis, Jess Gellada, Ernie Patricio, Mildred Varela, Odi Olmos and Roland Santos. The exhibit showcases recent on-the-spot watercolor paintings and runs until April 8.

PAJARO HOMECOMING. Northern Spain-based painter and art educator Tony D. Pajaro presents a special exhibit of new and old nature paintings in his Philippine residence in Mandaluyong City. The special exhibit runs from April 6-10. Call 532-8881.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On the AAP troubles

By Malang

MEMBERS of the so-called "premier" artists association, Art Association of the Philippines (AAP), are quarreling.

AAP founder Purita Kalaw Ledesma's vision for the AAP was to uplift the status of the Filipino artists. And she did it by putting up an annual art competition. No less than the presidents of the Philippines have graced and opened the annual shows.

Purita's vision was accomplished. Without Purita we would have no Botongs, Entengs, Cesars and Arturos to be proud of. The best of the crop were all members of the AAP then—but not anymore.

After Purita's leadership, the past and present officers only used the association to boost their egos. They promoted themselves first and the AAP second.

Several years ago, I was invited by the then AAP president Ed Castrillo to attend their annual meeting and election at the Sta. Ana racetracks. After the election, I was asked surprisingly to speak before the group. Reluctantly, I told the group of less than 50 attendees that the AAP had already outgrown its mission and should move forward.

The AAP should move beyond the annual art competition. Banks and other business corporations have already taken over those tasks. I suggest that the AAP go to Congress to lobby for lower taxes on art materials and stricter laws to protect artists' interests. I also suggested to the group to encourage the elder artists to rejoin AAP.

Years have passed, the AAP had changed leadership several times, and still the annual art competition is the only activity of the AAP. Why? Because it is the only way the AAP can retain its members.

The AAP never grew. The AAP only increases its members during the annual competition. For most of the year, the AAP board are the active members. Most often the AAP president is traveling abroad on foreign grants.

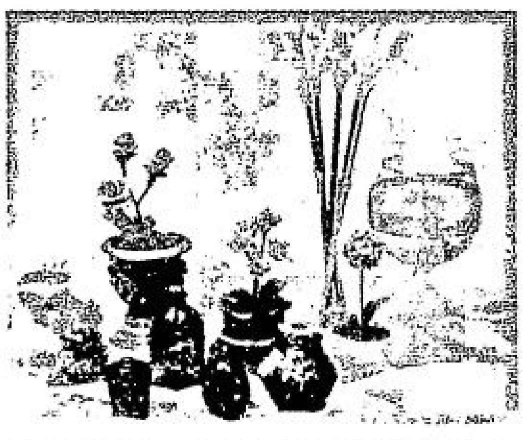
I bet there will be no members if there will be no annual exhibition-competition.

No competition equals no members.

Now the AAP members are quarreling over money. The Intramuros art group is also quarreling over money. *Wala na yatang* "starving artists." Starving art group *na lang*.

Have artists turned to the art of politics?

If Purita Kalaw Ledesma goes to sleep, the AAP should close shop. She did it all for us!



THE VICTOR Bella artworks featuring candles, decorative glassworks, flower sculpture and figurines

Workshop on candles and other crafts

INDUSTRIAL artist and painter Victor Bella, who graduated with a fine arts degree in Maastricht Academy of Visual Arts, Holland is proud open a new schedule for a series of weekend art courses known as the "Arts Inspiration Series for Fun, Gift Giving and Profit." The workshop schedule and description can be accessed at www.geocities.com/victor_bella/schedule.html.

Group courses include Artistic Candle Making with Decorative Mold Making, Decorative Painting on Glass Metal and Ceramics, Acrylic Painting on Canvas, Flower Sculpture, Figurine Making and Decorative Silicon Rubber Mold Making.

Artistic Candle Making will cover how to produce candles such as figurine, layered, container, gel and floating with special features such as aroma therapy, scented, slow burning, drip-less, hand-painted and insect repellent versions, including decorative mold-making techniques.

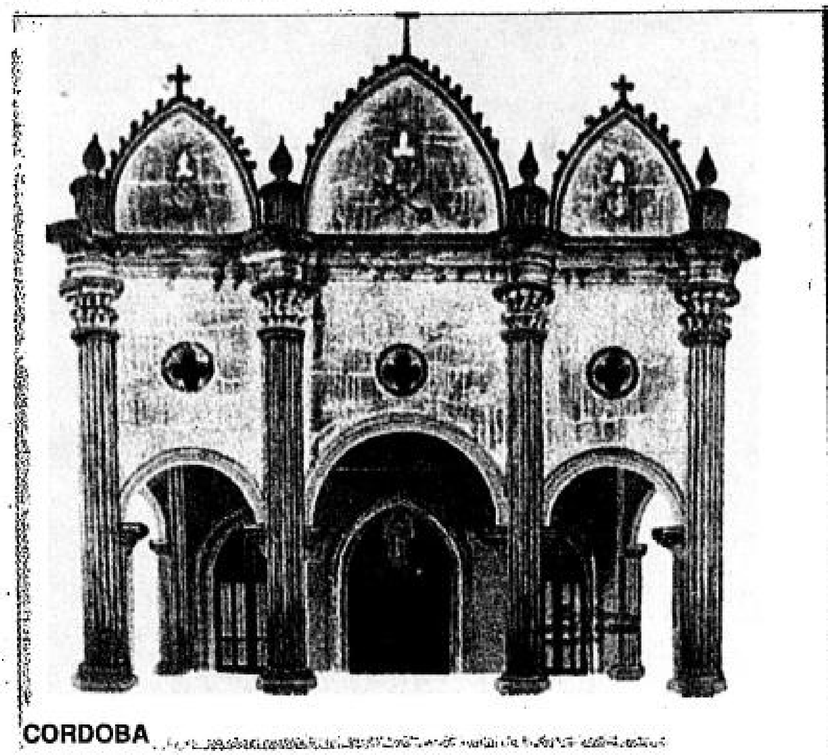
Decorative Painting on Glass, Metal and Ceramics will teach how to transform inexpensive materials sparkle with color and elegance. Projects include gemstone perfume bottles, floating candle container, canister, mugs and vases.

Figurine Making covers how to make transparent, translucent, opaque figurines, jewelry boxes and picture frames out of resin. Painting and Drawing Workshop includes the all essential step by step and basic and advance techniques. Painting Medium includes acrylic, watercolor and oil. Drawing Mediums include pencil, charcoal, pen and ink soft pastel and oil pastel. Students will learn how to handle painting with ease and confidence in approaching their preferred subject raging from landscapes, portraits, flowers, underwater and cloudscapes.

Silicon Rubber Mold Making will teach how to produce decorative mold made out of extremely durable rubber for mass reproduction of artworks such as figurines, candles, jewelry boxes and picture frames. Flower Sculpture includes the creation of non-withering vibrant and colorful flowers in both classic and modern styles using either oven-fire able or air-drying clay. Flowers to be produced are orchids, roses, calla lily, daisies, tulips and sunflowers.

Tutorials are also offered, providing the student a special promo package of all the courses, given in a one-on-one training schedule by appointment. Promo is until April 8 only. Participating students will receive complete and updated world-standard information.

Those interested may visit www.geocities.com/victor_bella for work or www.geocities.com/victor_bella/schedule.html. Call 890-3778 or (0917) 368-3212 during office hours (10 a.m.-12 nn, 1-5 p.m.), Mondays to Fridays. Visitations are by appointment. Lessons on Candle Making will be on April 7-8. There will also be a new schedule on April 21-22 at 30 Polaris St., Bel-Air, Makati.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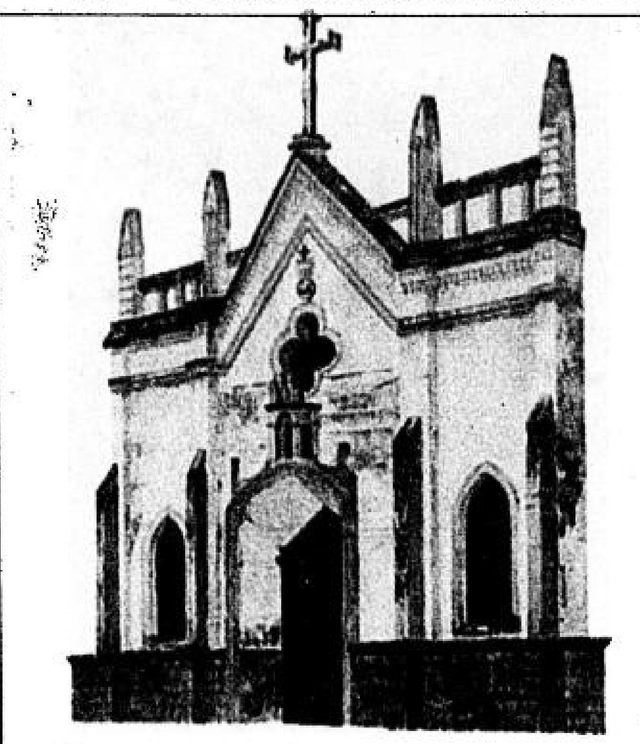
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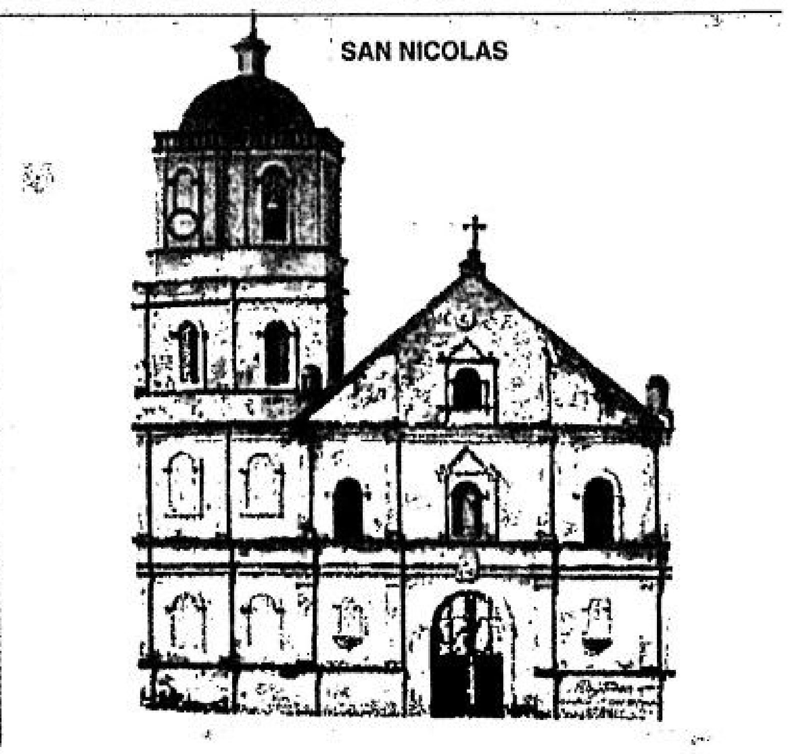

SAN NICOLAS

Ragodon's churches of Cebu

THE MANILA Art Frames and Gallery in Cebu was one of the first galleries there to bring in the works of the painters in Manila. Owned by Rogelio and Flora Pantaleon, the firm, originally located on Ramos Street, Cebu City, transferred to Gorordo Avenue in its own building in 1974. By 1980, the Panteleons returned to Manila and the gallery changed hands. Flora's sister, Cely Valero, and daughter, Araceli del Rosario (Chuchay), became the new owners.

The Valeros were then based in Iloilo. After nine years on Gorordo Avenue, the firm moved to its new place, an old house on 5 Benedicto St. Now, as then, they continue to cater to a large clientele of art buyers from all over the Visayas, who choose to come to Cebu to find out what's new in the art scene. Many foreigners based in the Visayas go to Manila Art Frame & Gallery when they have needs in the arts.

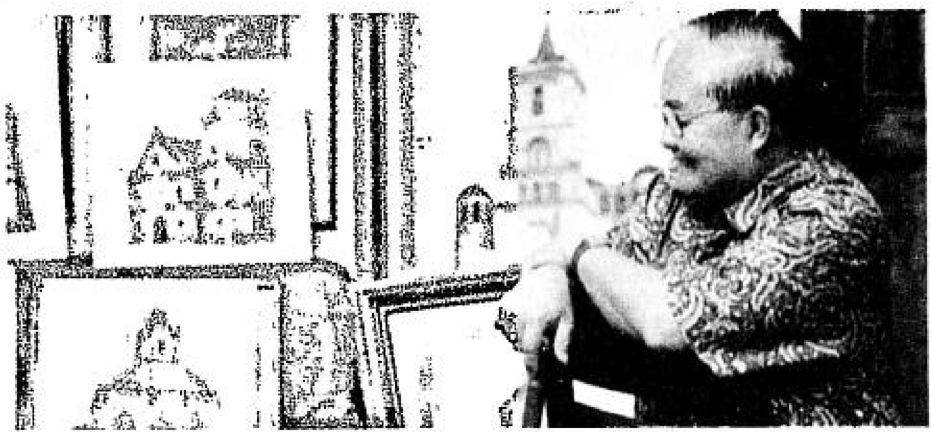
The firm was responsible for "importing" the works of Ang Kiu Kok, Cesar Legaspi, Antonio Ko (a longtime best seller), Mario Parial, Jeff Dizon, Oscar Salita, Romeo Rosete, Carlo Magno, Jimmy Bates and Charlie Icasas. The Valeros also have a branch in Iloilo, run by the two sons of Ms Valero.

The Cebuano gallery put up a large exhibit on March 23 of the acrylic works of a Manila-based artist Rod Ragodon titled "The Churches of Cebu." The exhibit showcases 32 paintings of Cebuano churches, the oldest being the Churches of Bantayan (1580), San Nicolas (1584), the Metropolitan Cathedral (1598) and Carcar (1599). The 16th-century churches are those of Boljoon, Barili and Mandaue. The 17th-century churches are those of Dalaguete, Argao, Danao, Opon and Samboani.

The first Filipino Christians were Cebuanos, baptized in 1521 by Fray Pedro Valderama. Thus, Cebu is steeped in Christianity and the Catholic faith. In the 1800s alone, Cebu built 22 churches.

Painter Rod Ragodon is known for recording old Catholic Churches for posterity, in particular, a church's façade. In the '60s he began a flat, elegant style utilizing Chinese calligraphic techniques.

Old Catholic Churches has been the subject matter of this painter since he received a Unesco grant in 1966 to tour the colonial churches of Europe and Mexico. The tour served to convince him that our own churches were unlike anything abroad.


RODOLFO Ragodon

Thus he paints as a historian wanting to preserve the architecture of the past. He paints his subject matter out of a strong belief they are perfect examples of an indigenous Philippine architecture that is unlike anything in the world.

The architectural designs, devices, decorations and motifs of the colonial Philippine Church is uniquely Filipino and distinctly folk. This is because the master carpenters and artisans, both Chinese and Filipino, were allowed the freedom to design and execute the large stone structures. Since Spanish friars and priests were then in a minority, they had to rely heavily on local experts for long-time projects such as building a church.

One could safely say then, that if there were any true Filipino architecture, one could call it Folk Colonial. And the structures that represent the style and depict them happen to be still standing.

Our church baroque style (in Cebu it is more Gothic) are full of folk elements. In Iloilo, the Church of Miagao depicts St. Christopher and the banana tree. The façade of San Joaquin Church carries a complete description of the Battle of Tetuan. Large buttresses of leaning rock several feet thick were innovated in order to protect and shelter the church from earthquakes and strong typhoons.

"The Churches of Cebu" is the latest major exhibition of Ragodon. His last Manila exhibit was in 1988. He has also exhibited in New York. He has a BFA from UP (1952) and a Philosophy and Letters degree from the University of Santo Tomas. He is a Ten Outstanding Young Men awardee for 1964 and was formerly director of the Ayala Museum.

Mandy Navasero holds photo workshop, phototrek

ACE photographer Mandy Navasero holds her Annual Summer Photoworkshop from April 7 to May 26. This year, in conjunction with the workshop, she is organizing a Holy Week Phototrek of the historic Ilocos Region and the lush wildness of Cagayan Valley.

The Phototrek invites photo enthusiasts, who may not necessarily be enrolled in the workshop, from April 12-15. The "phototrekkers" will visit and photograph mute witnesses to unfolding history—centuries-old churches with their impressive and ornate carvings and altars, sturdy lighthouses that still guide seafarers, isolated, almost pristine beaches and even old industries being practiced. Only 20 slots are available at P7,200 each.

Day 1 starts with the half-day trip to Vigan, Ilocos Sur, followed by a two-hour trip to Laoag City, Ilocos Norte.

Day 2 is tentatively scheduled to visit the Laoag Sinking Tower, St. William Cathedral, Tobacco, Monopoly site, Iloco Museum, Sarusar warehouse, Fort Ilocandia Resort, Paoay Lake and Church, Bagnus-Abelcloth center and departure for Batac and Currimao, Badoc (Juan Luna Museum), Burgos and the Cape Bojeador Lighthouse, and on to Pagudpud (Patapat Viaduct, beach resorts and other sites).

Day 3 covers Cagayan, including Tuguegarao City, Piat, Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, Calvary Hills, Callao Caves, Sierra Caves and other sites.

Day 4 covers the trip back to Manila from Cagayan.

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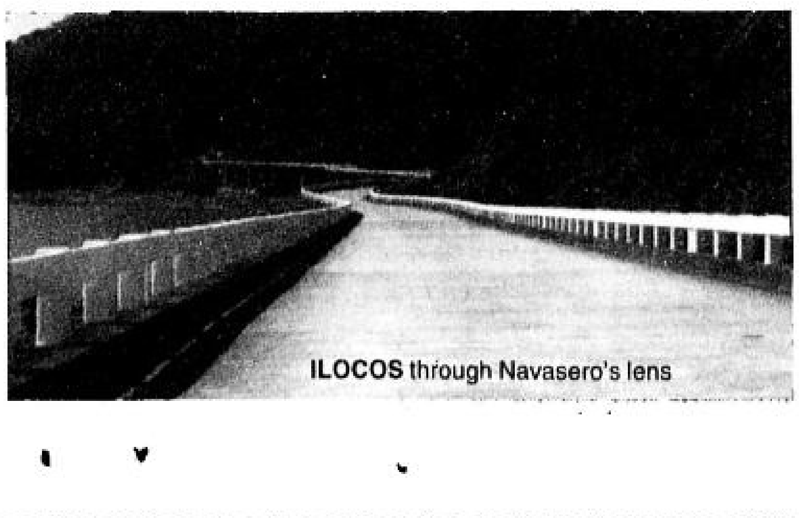
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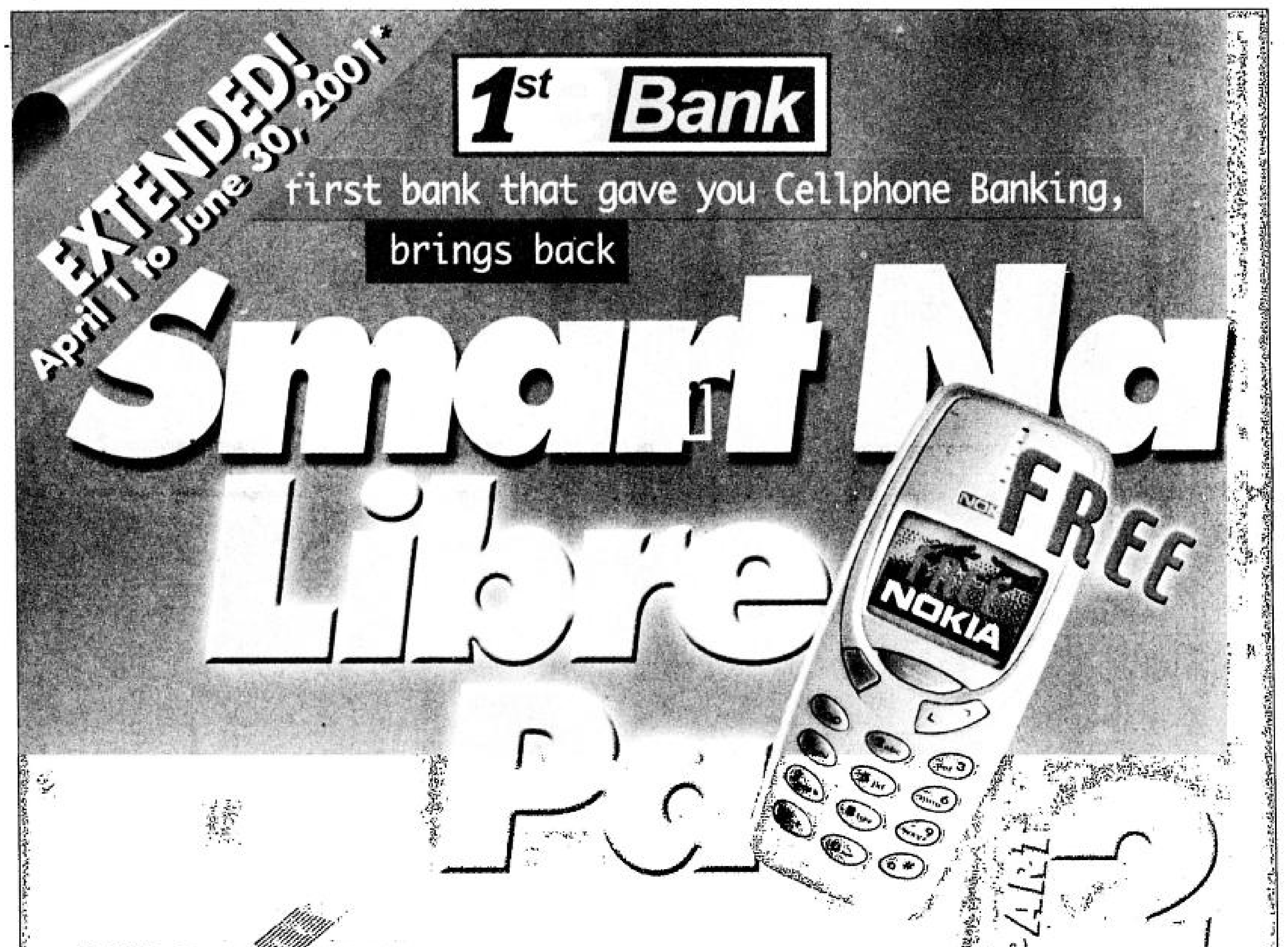

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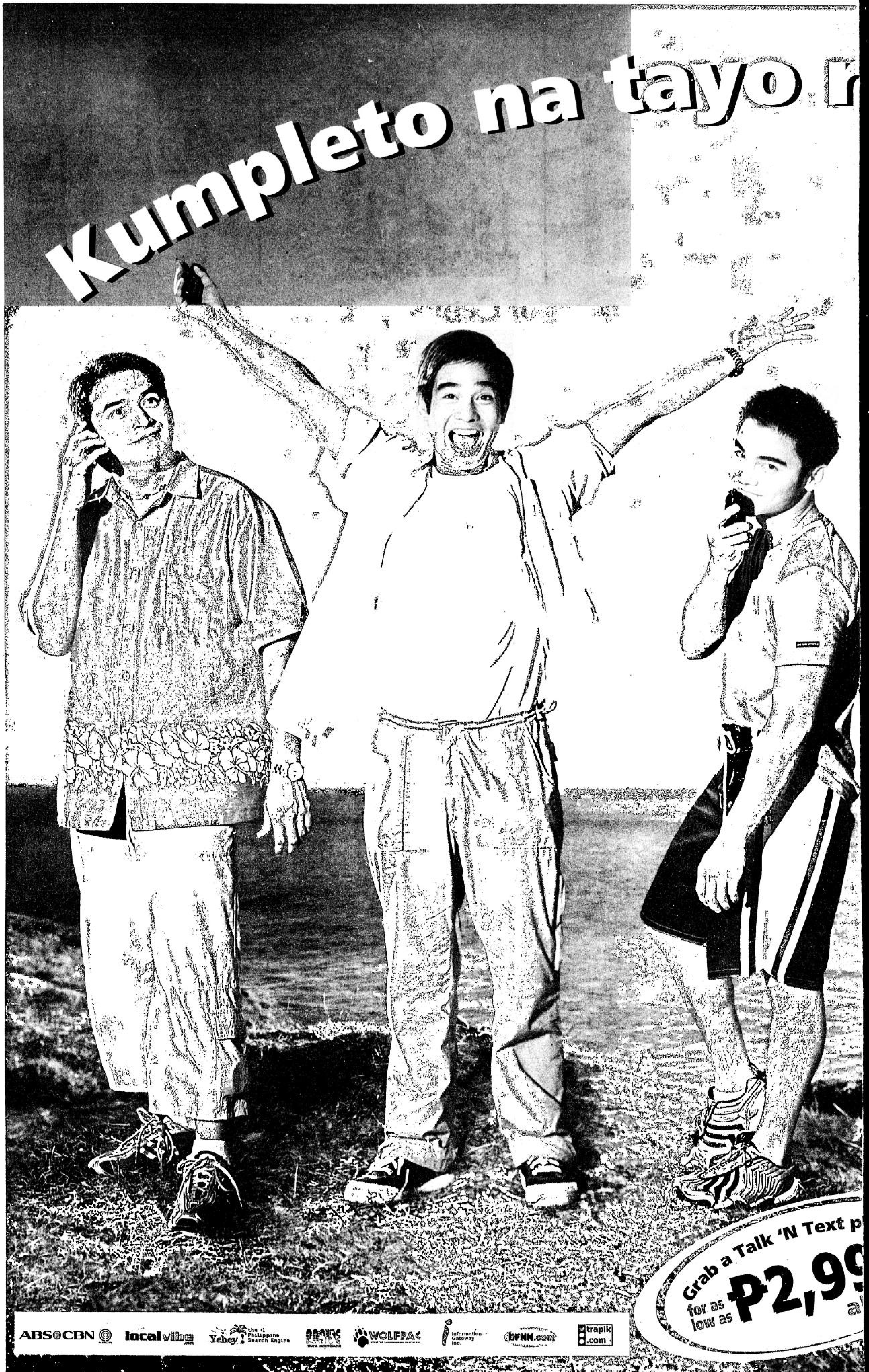
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Altered reality during Carnevale in Venice

(From page D1)

have all these people walking around in costumes. Stifling your imagination in Venice is absolutely impossible.

Amazing feeling

"Going to the Guggenheim reawakens my love of museums. I can't really explain the most amazing feeling when you actually see one of your favorite paintings in front of you. I am really surprised to see Magritte's 'Empire of Light.' Actually, surprise isn't even the right word to describe it—I am overwhelmed.

"We walk around a lot. Venice has two faces—during the day, it is full of people, the mood is festive with much laughter, and an inexplicable vivaciousness permeates the air. Music plays in just about every corner of every piazza—Brazilian, Peruvian, reggae—you name it, they have it!

"There are people painting faces (a very lucrative business during Carnevale), an old man making giant bubbles, and even a small troupe of circus performers wandering around. Two Punch and Judy shows, a ballet and a play all go on at the same time, making it difficult to decide where to place yourself with so much happening all around.

"As twilight descends, Venice shows her other side. The city is still beautiful and romantic but in an eerie, dark, gothic kind of way. The narrow streets are like Escher drawings with so many little bridges and paths leading nowhere. Adding to the confusion, the buildings look the same in the dark. While walking, thinking that the next turn will harbor a bridge, you instead find yourself in front of another watery dead-end. It is spooky, deathly quiet and you hear the 'clack-clack' of your heels as they hit the cobblestones.

"Lights strung over the streets make evenings special. Some are in the shape of masks. Others dangle in midair in varying lengths, giving the impression you are walking under a waterfall of starlight. The Rialto Bridge is spectacular at night because as you walk under it and look up, you see a ceiling of lights that twinkle like stars. If you're lucky, you'll see people dressed in 17th century costume coming down the steps and I swear, you'll have to keep pinching yourself to make sure you're not dreaming.

Costumes with style

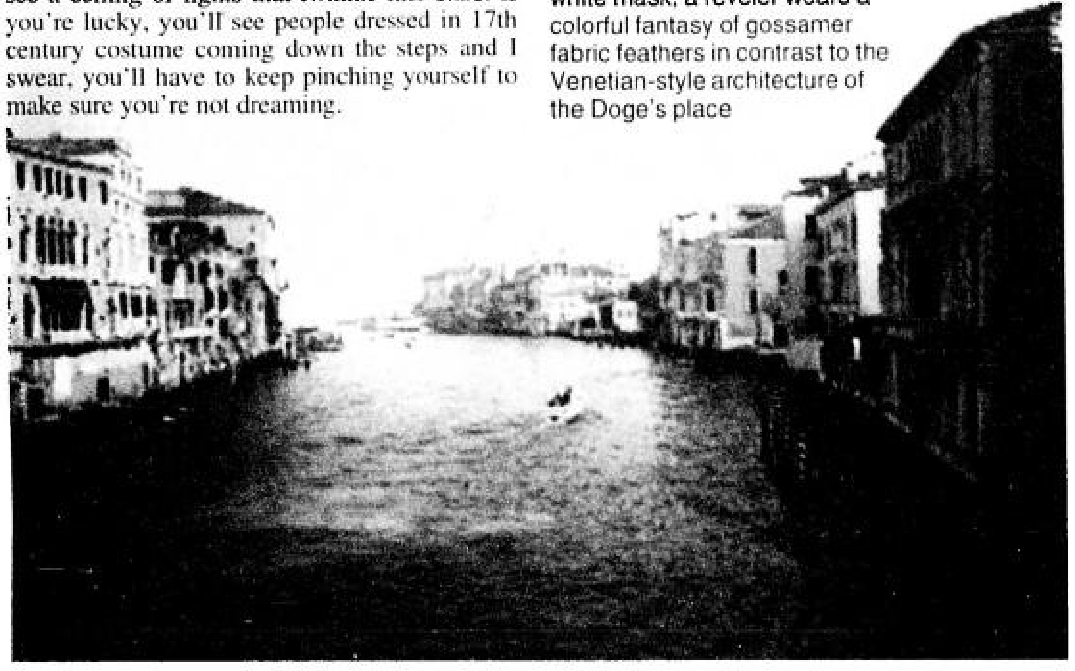
"And the costumes! Aaaaaaaaargh! I can't even begin to describe them! People really plan out what they are going to wear for Carnavale. Venetians have taste—they make and wear their costumes with style. *Hindi lang pa-bonggahan.* You can see that a lot of work goes into the making of the costumes. We see a bunch of 40-year-old women dressed up as the 101 Dalmatians, old people dressed up as the Bavarian Royal family, a group of men dressed up as the entourage of Poseidon, Lord of the Sea—it is just amazing!

"They seem to make something out of nothing! One of the more interesting costumes I see

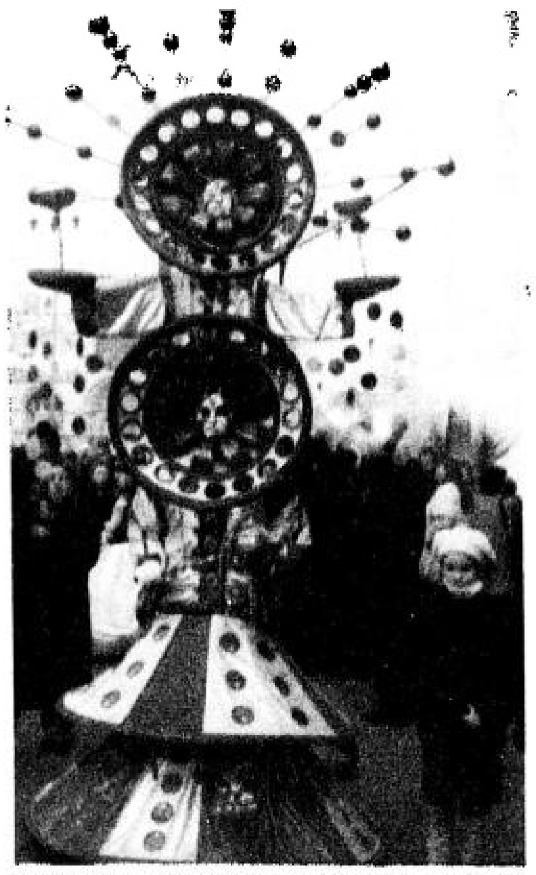
STANDING stoic behind a white mask, a reveler wears a colorful fantasy of gossamer fabric feathers in contrast to the Venetian-style architecture of the Doge's place

TO SEE is to believe the masses of feathers, masks, beads, crinolines crushed velvet, fine silks and stones that swirl around Venice during Carnevale.

FANTASY becomes reality for one night until the following dawn brings the sobriety of Ash Wednesday and the Lenten season that follows.



LA SERENISSIMA, the historic city of the Doges, serene as always in the early morning before the revelry of Carnevale breaks out along the Grand Canal.



LOOKING like two persons inside a single costume, a sculpture of a face wearing a mask is attached to the shoulders of a real person, making reality look like an illusion.

is by an old woman who wears a dress made of folded-up shiny paper in the shape of cones. She emits bolts of lightning as she moves. She is with her husband dressed as an 18th-century magistrate. They are so cute! We watch a soccer game with the players dressed in costume wearing their 'family colors'—like how they played centuries ago. It is pretty cool.

"There are really elaborate costumes. Two men are dressed as a pair of flamingos. Their headdresses must have at least been 4 ft tall and they wear pink stockings, pink tutus and these killer pink platform heels that would put Ru Paul to shame. The cool part is that they even act like flamingos—whenever one of them will gesture, the other one will mirror and imitate. There is a costume that looks like a second person is perched on the shoulders of another but, in fact, it is just a massive sculpture with a mask attached to the person walking around with it. It's hard to explain. You just have to see the flurry of feathers, masks, beads, brocade, crinoline, crushed velvet, fine silks, fake precious stones and color—lots and lots of color—swirls of shapes that is Carnevale.

"Probably the only thing I can find wrong with Venice is the food. Eating in Venice isn't exactly something of a culinary delight or adventure because to get a good meal, you have to fork out a lot of money. If you want to eat good food, you have to make sure of one of three things: Have money to spend, make sure your parents are with you or make sure you're with somebody else's parents! If nothing works out with the first three suggestions, there is always McDonald's!"

Reality bites back at the sight of McDonald's.

E-mail the author at afv@pacific.net.ph

Manila's potentials for renewal

(From page D8)

nos call them Spanish, visiting Mexican and Spanish architect-friends have remarked on their uniqueness and graciousness as a style found only in the Philippines, particularly in Manila, where it originated.

San Sebastian Church is another famous landmark that calls Manila its home. San Sebastian is an all-steel basilica, designed in Neo Gothic style. It was manufactured in Belgium and assembled together on its present site in 1891. It is one of the few all-steel churches in the world. There is also the Quiapo Church designed in Neo-Baroque style by Juan Nakpil. The Quiapo Church, which is better known as the home of the Black Nazarene that celebrates its fiesta every Jan. 9, was built on the ruins of an earlier church that burned down in 1929.

However grand, Catholic churches do not have a monopoly on unique architectural style. The Golden Mosque, the largest and most beautiful mosque in the country outside Mindanao, is just a few blocks away from Quiapo Church. Decorated with motifs inspired by Tausug mats and boat prows, the Golden Mosque constitutes the heart of a community of enterprising Moslem traders.

The University Belt also has an interesting architectural heritage. San Beda College in Mendiola is a Neo Gothic structure of the 1920s. Its chapel has ceiling paintings that depict the Virtues and the Vices.

These [experiences] are unknown south of the Pasig and, for that matter, in other Filipino cities, says Zialcita. They lend these northern Manila districts an ambience that, were it not for the filth, the stink and the hovels, would have the charm of Amsterdam.

Zialcita underscores the urgency of protecting Manila's cultural, artistic and historical landmarks. Protecting these landmarks would enable Manila to face the outside world with a distinctive and noble identity, far removed from the Smokey Mountain image it has been afflicted with since the 1970s.

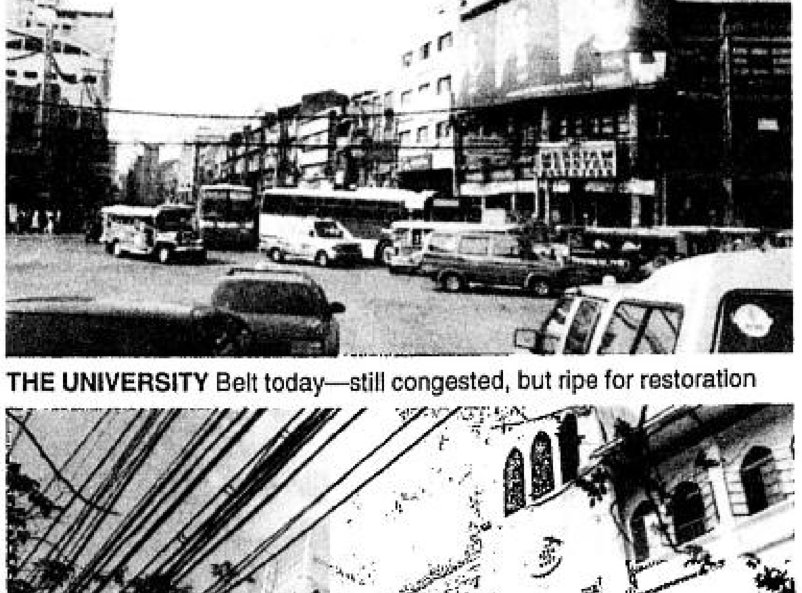
He recalls that in 1999, he brought around a team of French architects and urban planners to Hidalgo Street, Quiapo and that they kept repeating, over and over again, that the 19th-century houses leading to San Sebastian Church must be saved. Over 100 years ago, a travel guide to Manila remarked that Hidalgo Street was the best in all of Manila because its buildings are svelte and comfortable with well-made arcades.

Side by side with protecting streets, houses and buildings should come the effort to respect the city's diversity. Diversity is what makes a city alive and interesting. New York, which is probably the most diverse city in the world, is the best example. To renew Manila, the government should respect the city's diversity, says Zialcita. The urge to commercialize inner Manila without regard for local color makes the city monotonous.

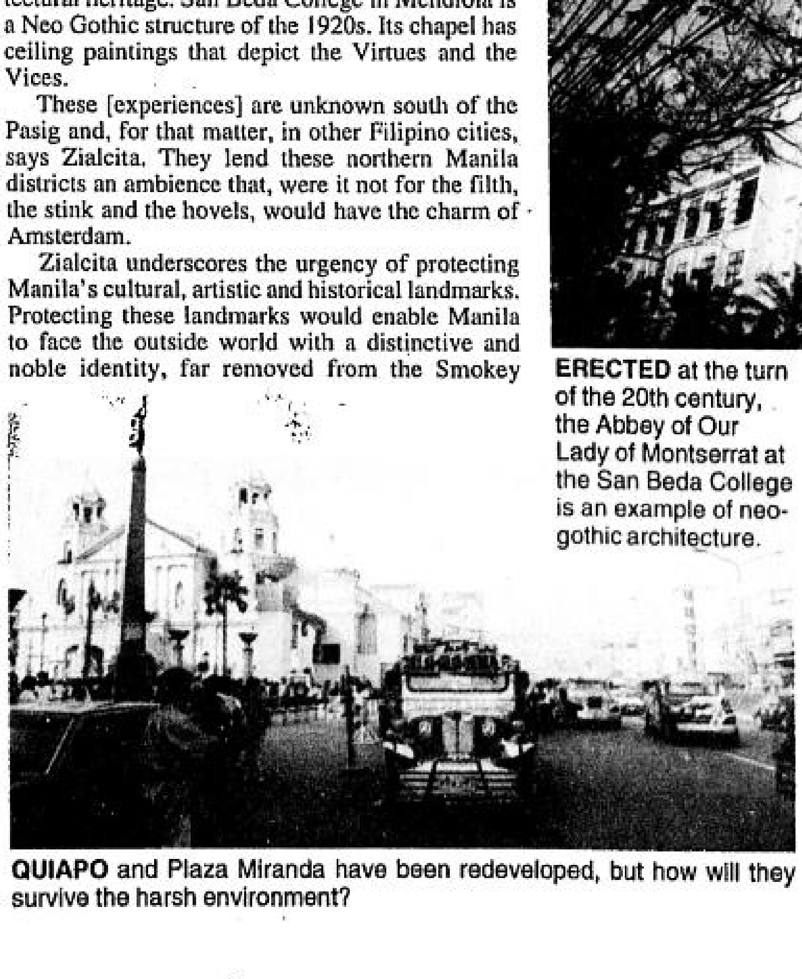
Manila is a diverse, interesting city. Being the capital of the Philippines, its heritage is not just its own—it is part of the heritage of the entire nation. Let us be vigilant about protecting it so that the next generation may grow up knowing Manila as the grand old city that it is.

THE UNIVERSITY Belt today—still congested, but ripe for restoration

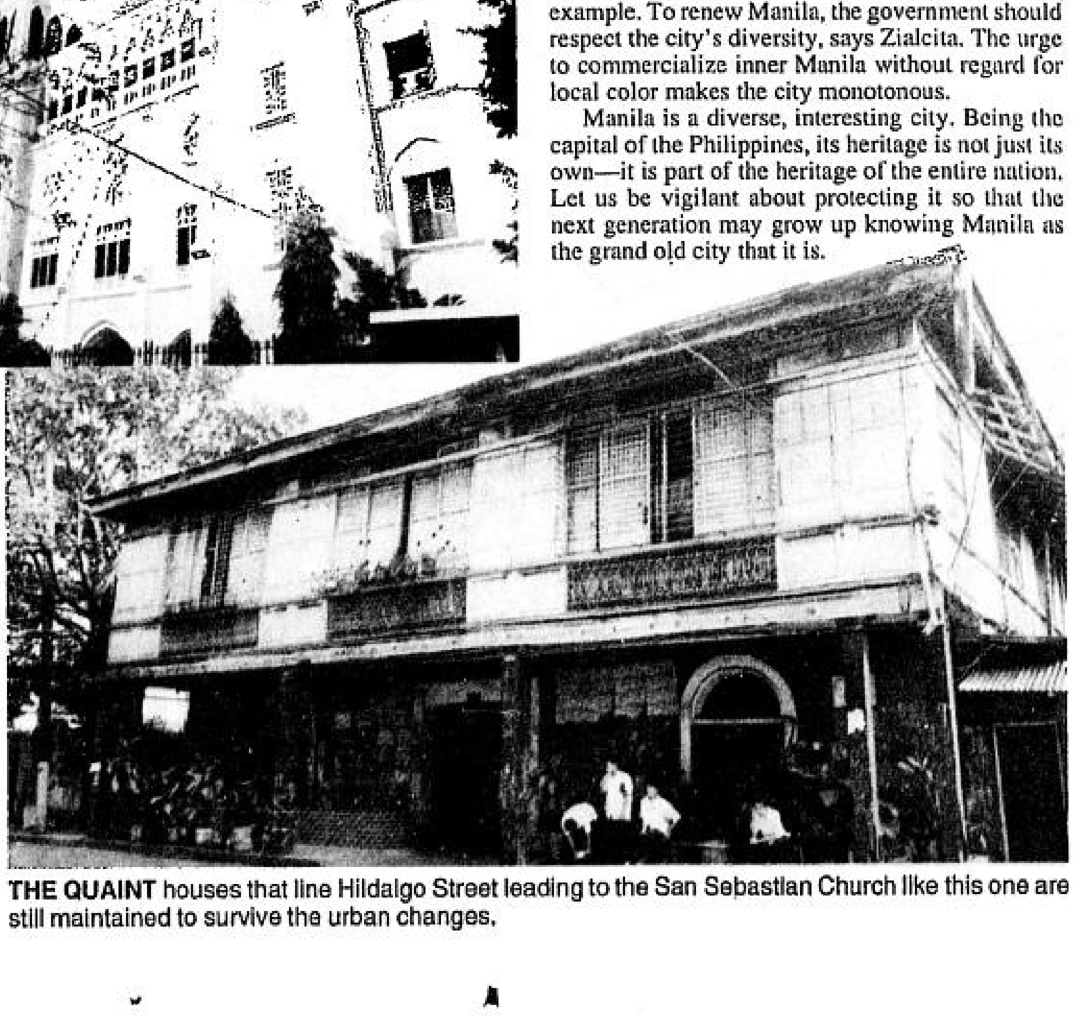
QUIAPO is famous for its countless hawkers of anything under the sun.



ERECTED at the turn of the 20th century, the Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat at the San Beda College is an example of neogothic architecture.



QUIAPO and Plaza Miranda have been redeveloped, but how will they survive the harsh environment?



THE QUAINT houses that line Hildalgo Street leading to the San Sebastian Church like this one are still maintained to survive the urban changes.

FEU commencement exercises

THE FAR Eastern University will hold its 73th commencement exercises at PICC on April 6 with Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr. as speaker in the morning ceremonies and Secretary Patricia A. Sto. Thomas of the Department of Labor and Employment as speaker in the afternoon rites. Justice David will be conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoria causa, while Secretary Sto. Thomas will be conferred Doctor of Humanities, honoria causa.

Before Justice Davide was appointed chief justice in 1998, he had held various positions, including associate justice, senior associate justice, Concon delegate, assemblyman and Comelec chair. A native of Cebu, Justice Davide has to his credit numerous honors and awards. He took up Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Science and Jurisprudence at UP Diliman.

Sto. Tomas finished her master's degree in Public Administration at Harvard University, Master of Science in Development Communications at UP Los Baños and Bachelor of Arts, major in Political Science, at Far Eastern University. She had held several positions, including Civil Service Commission chair, undersecretary of employment, assistant secretary for human resources development of the education department, professorial lecturer at Ateneo de Manila University and UP Institute for Industrial Relations. She was a Manila Bulletin columnist and has represented the Philippines and spoken in international conferences.

Secretary Sto. Tomas had been conferred Doctor of Humanities, honoria causa, by Ateneo de Davao; Doctor of Education, honoria causa, by Western Mindanao State University, and Doctor of Administration, honoria causa, by Cagayan Valley State University.

DAVIDE

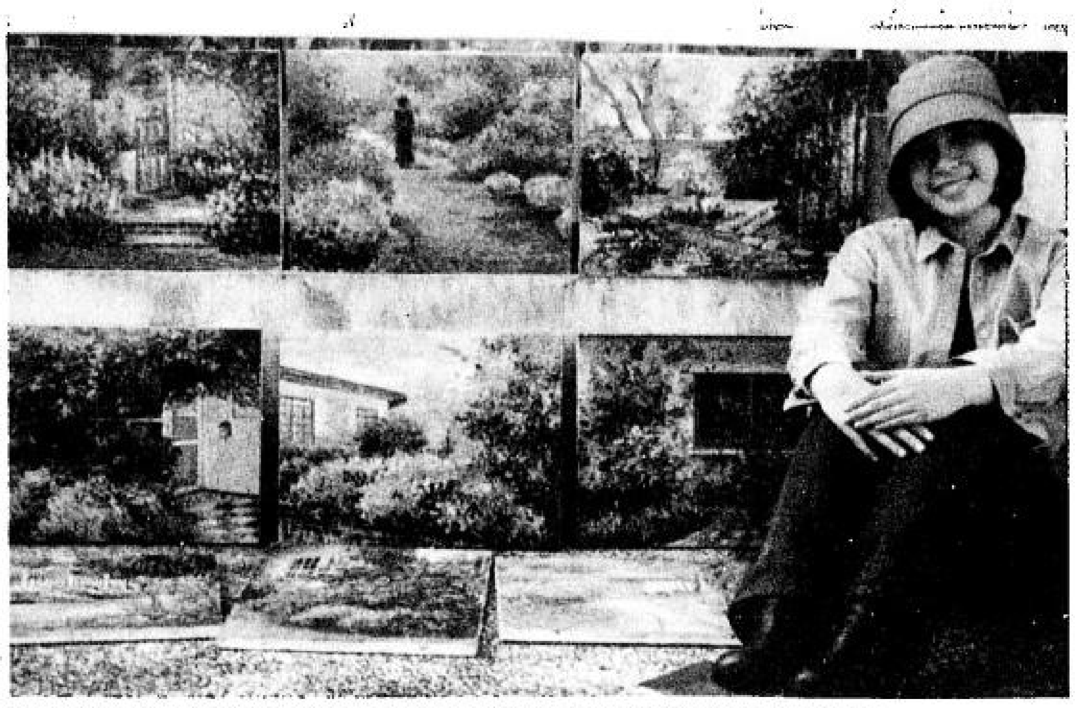
STO. Tomas

Camille de la Rosa's garden of delights

BY GINO DORMIENDO

THE ARTISTIC development of Camille Jean Verdelaire de la Rosa has taken a serendipitous turn this summer of 2001. Being the rightful heir to her father's artistic legacy, the 18-year-old painter has opted to simultaneously exhibit in two adjoining galleries—Artistree and Gallery 828, both located at the topmost level of Shangri-La Plaza—with a hundred pieces on view (until April 15). The staggering output from the artist still in her teens is one incontrovertible proof of her boundless, youthful energy, which has not a bit dissipated, and of her steadfast commitment to continually explore new terrain.

Dubbed "Prelude," the twin exhibits consist of oils, soft pastels and charcoal drawings, which, as presaged by the signature piece, "Camille's Secret Garden," signal a radical departure from the artist's previous works. Gone are the heavily laced, markedly reverential renderings of the landscape theme (her father Ibarra's favorite turf), and the colors that animate these new works are, by comparison, more subtly muted but no less audacious, her subjects more indelibly mystical and radiant in their three-dimensional configuration. Here, nature's beauty is no longer limned in its botanical richness unlike those we have seen in her past oeuvre, giving credence to Cezanne's dictum that great art is not merely an imitation of nature, but is truly a re-creation which, as such, follows its own laws.

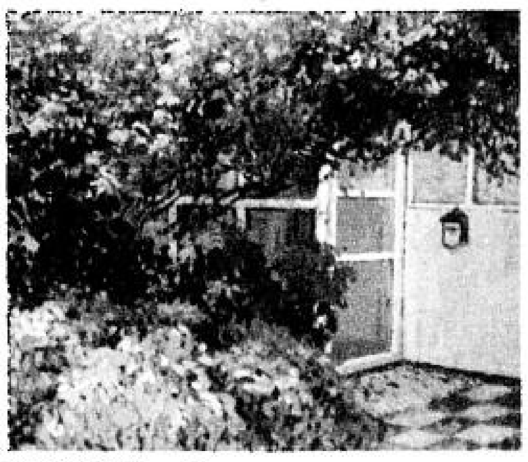


THE YOUNG ARTIST. Camille de la Rosa, with her new works, has come of age.

The main suite consists of oil landscapes of rustic settings of rolling farmlands in the Batangas and Laguna area, the still verdant portions of Marikina, and views of enclosed tropical garden in the arboreal sanctuaries of Makati, Mandaluyong and Tagaytay. The stark contrast afforded by these parallel but seemingly paradoxical views of nature has provided the artist with ample room to express her sentiments on the environmental theme. The former works are ostensibly expansive in format, regaling the viewer with panoramic sights of the sky, earth and foliage in richly nuanced harmony, exuding a visual warmth that resurrects memories of summer. The latter are more properly intimate in their attempt to render the delicacy of flowers and shrubs, with man-made structures (such as fences, gates and landscaped gravel walks) intended to offset the pervasive cacophony of the lush surroundings.

In her fifth exhibition (all mounted, by the way, within a three-year period), De la Rosa has added a suite of smaller-sized charcoal drawings executed on pastel paper, mainly inspired by photographs taken by her late father in his numerous provincial jaunts. Intended as a breaker from her workaday painting chores, these drawings echo the sentiments of a true-blue environmentalist as she invariably focuses on the subject of treescapes: Rows of stated, robust trees caressed by the gently blowing wind, their movement expressed in fuzzy, deeply layered brushstrokes.

De la Rosa has, as the recent works attest, consciously striven to wean herself from the overpowering presence of her father, the late, lamented Filipino impressionist whose brilliant, pointillistic daubs had ominously hovered in her canvases like an imperial king sitting on his throne. Her erstwhile reverential treatment has slow but surely been disappearing and, in this exhibit, Camille de la Rosa has indeed come into her own.



"SONIA'S House"

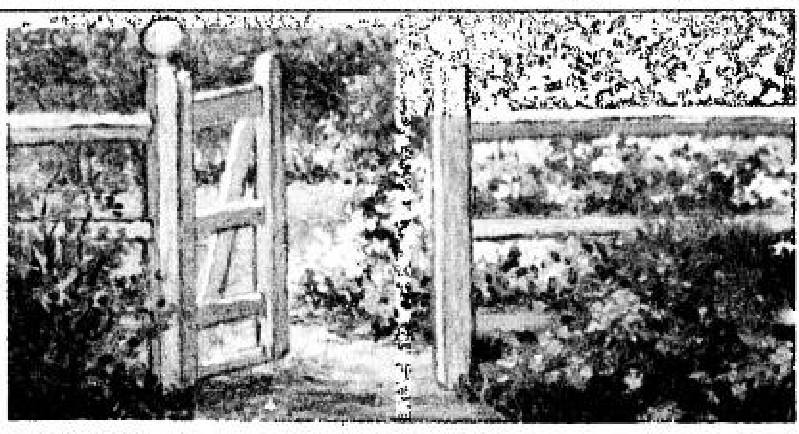
While she once heavily relied on the pervasive sensuousness and exhilarating effects of colors to dominate her works, she has now shifted gears, so to speak, by wisely tempering the severity of her palette, moving with perspicacity in depicting her imagery. Gone, too, are the omnipresent miniscule dots, the famous trademark of Ibarra de la Rosa, a technique upon which she was first cast in her desire to posthumously pay homage to her father who suddenly passed away in 1998.

Significantly, the artist's new oeuvre employs a harmonic unity between the various elements of the landscape. Take, for instance, the "Bulacan" series, with the slope of the terrain descending without rupture down toward the stream, with the darker mountain peaks in the distance looming in the background. In yet another work, "Marikina," the landscape's linear perspective is offset by a row of shrubs in the middleground, while farther still sits a pool of blue waters from the Marikina River as if solidly resting on the peaks. These works are the most ambitious she has done to date.

It will be recalled that in her show last year (for the record, a near sellout), De la Rosa exhibited works on the traditional format of the canvas, where she shifted from the subject of petals and blossoms to still lifes of Ilocano *burnay* jars to lush countryside landscapes. Then, in a rather transitory mode, she included a few portraits of her father, another facet of her artistic talent, which was not at all surprising considering her propensity for capturing the human form with remarkable fidelity.

In her two earlier shows, De La Rosa focused on the subject of Philippine flora, exploring in the process the myriad beauty of floral images—anthuriums, cattleyas, the allamande, the Doña Aurora and the bougainvillea—in such a way "that the veins of her anthuriums are so prominent that the eyes can feel their luxuriant texture."

The latest works of this young artist, whose manifold talents extend to singing and acting, that is, if she could only have more time left to indulge in her other passions, make use of the human figure as another element in the landscape. In "The White Fence," a lady gardener is shown tending her plants, her squat, forlorn presence unmistakably etched in a sea of blooms, contemplating by the stroke of her hands the flowers blowing wild and free. In these works, the gardens are clearly reflective of the Emersonian spirit, which posits that nature is imbued with a spirit embracing and connecting all things, a tenet of which the artist is a staunch disciple herself. Camille de la Rosa's rapturous reverence for nature becomes all the more perceivable in her rare ability to capture the reality of site and unravel the intricate mysteries of nature that, in Henry David Thoreau's words, "we can never have enough of." By capturing the image of trees as the soul of the natural world, the artist has let loose the natural forces that will help restore the earth's beauty and, ultimately, renew the faith in God's creation so essential to life and art.



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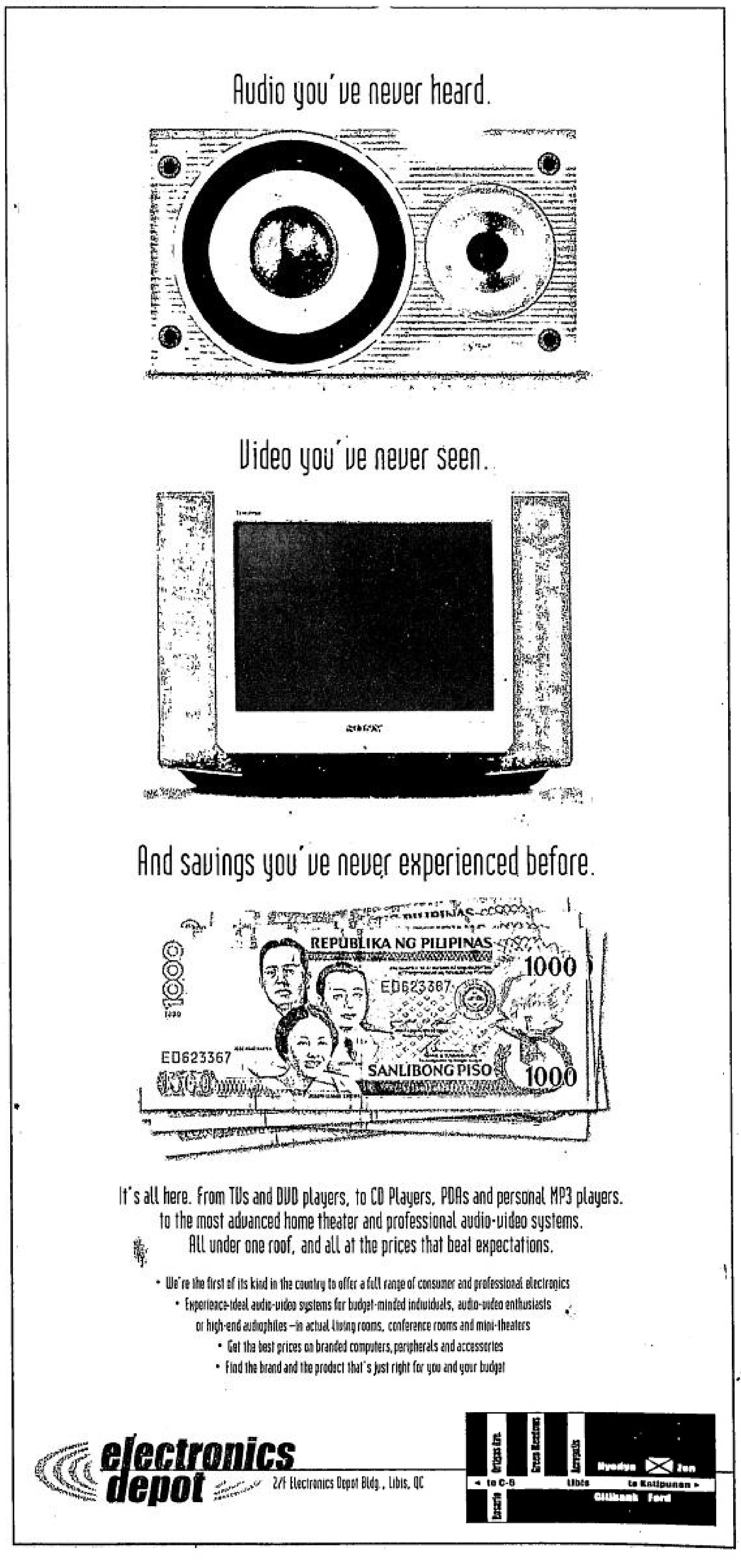

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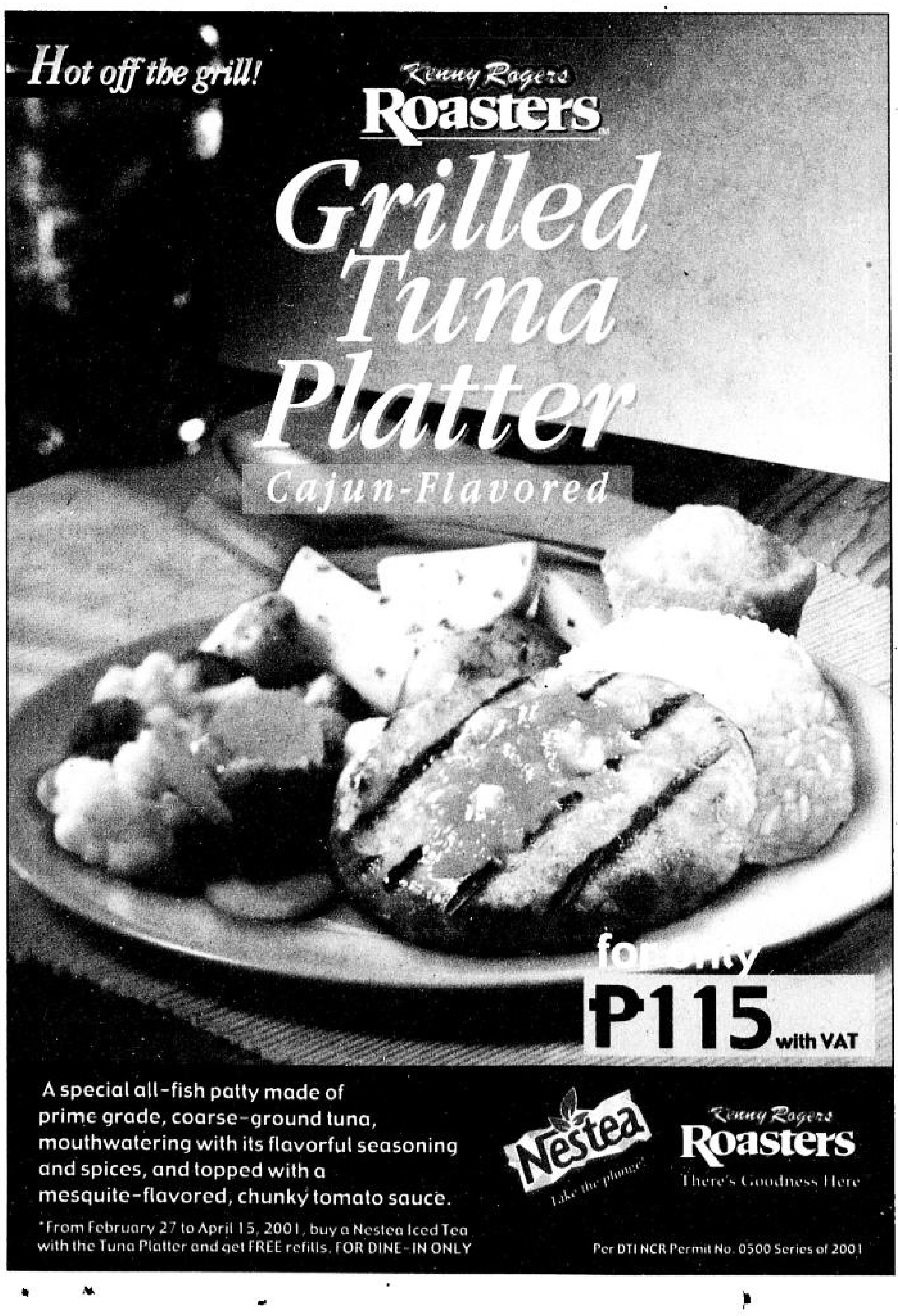

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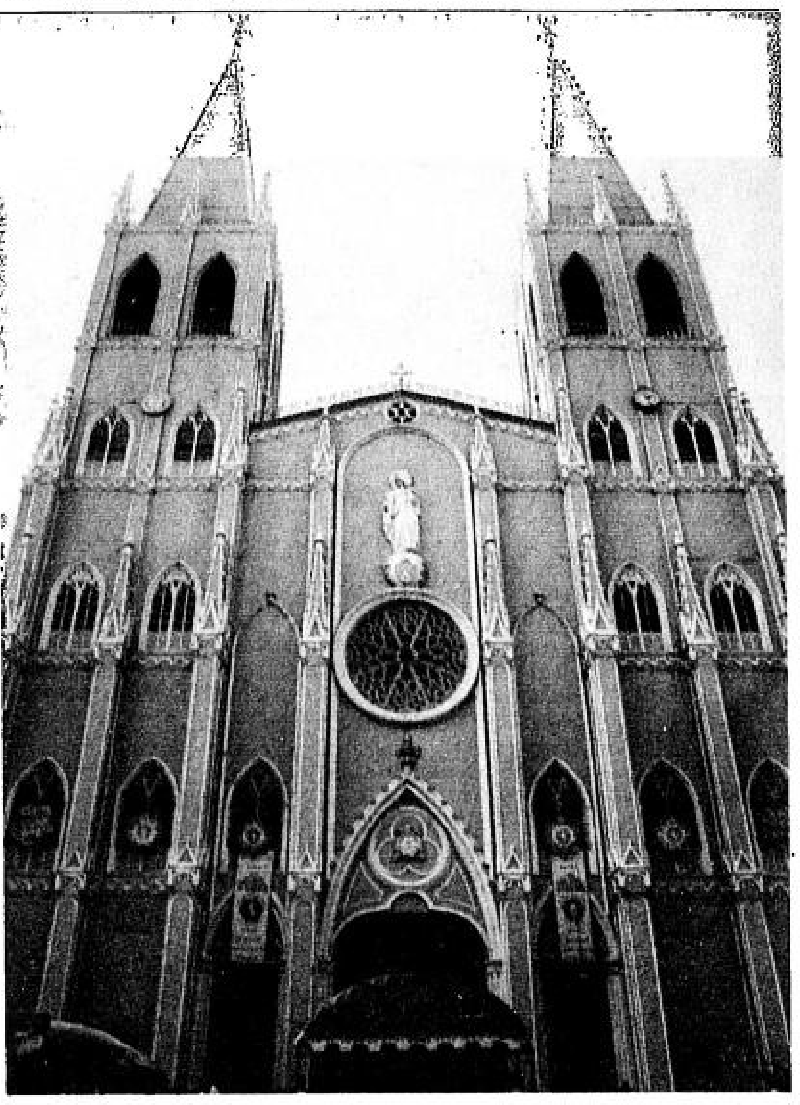

THE SAN Sebastian Church's towering magnificence is now a point of historical reference.

Manila's potentials for renewal

A recent FEU conference on urban planning shows that much can be done to retain Manila's unique architectural heritage

MANILA is undoubtedly the Philippines' most historic city. It also boasts of some of the most magnificent architecture. Examples of these include the all-steel Basilica de San Sebastian (San Sebastian Church), the walled city of Intramuros, the ancestral houses and the Golden Mosque, one of the largest and most beautiful mosques in the country.

But these landmarks, which are part of the Philippines' cultural heritage, will disappear unless we take steps to protect them. In fact, today's generation has come to know Manila more for its squalor and crime than for its culture and heritage.

Many students who study in private schools fear Central Manila, thanks to the sensationalized reportage by the local media about pickpockets and Moslem drug dealers, writes historian Fernando Zialcita in his paper, "Revitalizing the City through Heritage: Possibilities in Quiapo and the University Belt," read at recently held International Conference on Managing Megacities in the 21st century at the Manila Hotel, hosted by the Far Eastern University-Center for Studies on Urban Environment (FEU-SURE).

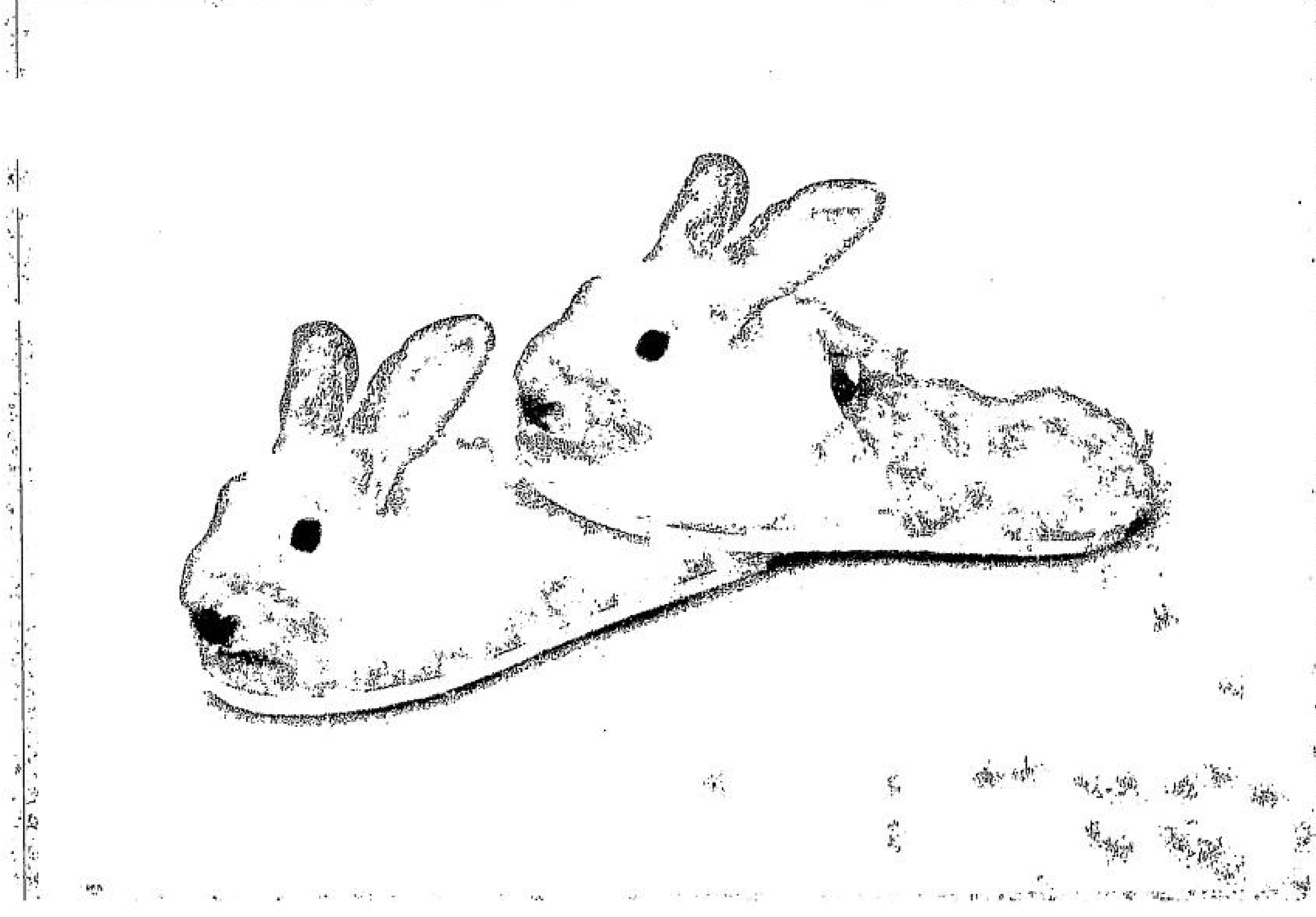
Manila, particularly Quiapo and the University Belt, are full of potentials. If properly preserved, these can contribute a lot to enriching Manila's cultural heritage. Preserving these landmarks would go a long way in making Manila known throughout the world, much like how the Eiffel Tower in Paris or the Statue of Liberty in New York did for their cities.

Among the features that make this part of Manila unique is its topography. Manila spreads on a delta that the Pasig creates on its journey from the lake of Bai to Manila Bay. And despite the degradation that has befallen northern Manila since the 1950s, strolling through Tondo, San Nicolas, Binondo, Quiapo and San Miguel is still a unique experience because of the long and winding bodies of water passing under half-moon stone bridges.

In writing about Manila, renowned urban planner Daniel Burnham (who was commissioned to develop a plan for the city) paid tribute to it: Possessing the bay of Naples, the winding river of Paris and the canals of Venice, Manila has before it an opportunity unique in [the] history of modern times, the opportunity to create a unified city equal to the greatest of the Western world, with [the] unparalleled priceless addition of a tropical setting

And, of course, there are the surviving turn-of-the century houses with elegant proportions and intricate wrought-iron grillwork. Manila's architectural style is uniquely its own. The *bahay na bato at kahoy* (wood and stone houses) with its lattice woodwork with either capiz shells or frosted glass panes, first appeared in Intramuros after the earthquakes of the mid-17th century. While Filipi-

MANILA'S/ p.D6



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From workshoppers to pros

By Zeneida Amador

"WHY don't you," asked Chelo Banal, "write something for me," as she dipped into her tofu.

"About theater?" I asked, enjoying my eel.

"Yes," she said, "with a slant on education, let's say, or whatever you want."

I said yes immediately. It's a good thing I'm not young or pretty because I'm a congenital "yesser."

At any rate, our Repertory Summer Theater Workshop starts tomorrow and Ria, our "mother superior" at the workshop, had been bugging me to write about it, too, so here I am trying to fulfill both assignments.

First, I thought I'd just wing it by inventing things former workshoppers would probably say, but of course that lazy "out" would go against all we teach about truth in theater. So I decided to work instead.

I don't know if you've seen our musical "Celebration III" (that's one more than Edsa II), a musical revue that included 10 kids who call themselves Rep Y2K Shortstoppers, after the adult group we have called showstoppers. These are kids ranging from ages 11-16 and whom we've brought to Alabang, Subic, Enchanted Kingdom, the atrium at our mall and several other venues. They've taken our workshops, appeared in our musical "Oliver!" and have bonded together so much they are together most of their free time. Looking at their boundless energy, their enthusiasm and, of course, their talent, Rep formed them into a singing group, which has charmed audiences every time they perform.

> Repertory Summer Theater Workshop continues to produce some of the brightest new voices on stage

To go back to the assignment, I interviewed the kids about what they thought of theater, the workshops and performing as pros. I'm certainly glad I talked to them because they came up with things I could never have invented. They're a garrulous, self-confident bunch who learn steps and notes fast and are quick to adjust to different kinds of performance conditions. Though there were common denominators in the things they said they learned from the summer workshop and from working in Rep like discipline, focus, commitment and hard work, they had things to say which made good copy.

Here they are:

Camille Cabrera, 14

"I wanted to be a lawyer," says Camille, "but I later on decided against it."

"Why?" I asked.

"*Kasi tinatama 'yung mali,*" she answered. In theater, "'*Yung tama, tama*; '*yung mali, mali*. I love theater because our teachers and our parents tell us we are unique and special, and when I'm performing, that's when I feel I really am unique and special. Singing and dancing is my way of praising God."

Charles Barredo, 15

A cut of the same cloth as her mom, Baby Barredo, she loves singing and dancing and really wants to be an actress. She wants to take business after high school.

"Not theater?" I asked.

"I already learn that in Rep," she said, "but I want to take business so I can help sell shows and tickets."

Well, here's one who's conscious of arts marketing. "After my business course I'll try to get a scholarship to London to round out my theater

FROM/ p.E2

EXPECTED to perform as their adult counterpart, the Rep Shortstoppers charm audiences everywhere they perform. From left: Timmy Sta. Maria, Denise Laurel, Charlie Barredo, Mazie Cajucom, Chevy Mercado, Camille Cabrera and Alex Michelena

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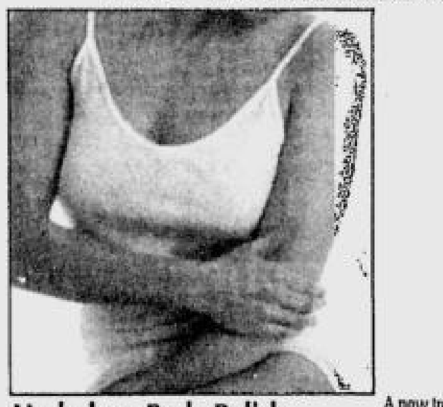

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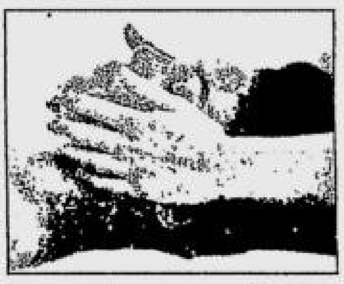

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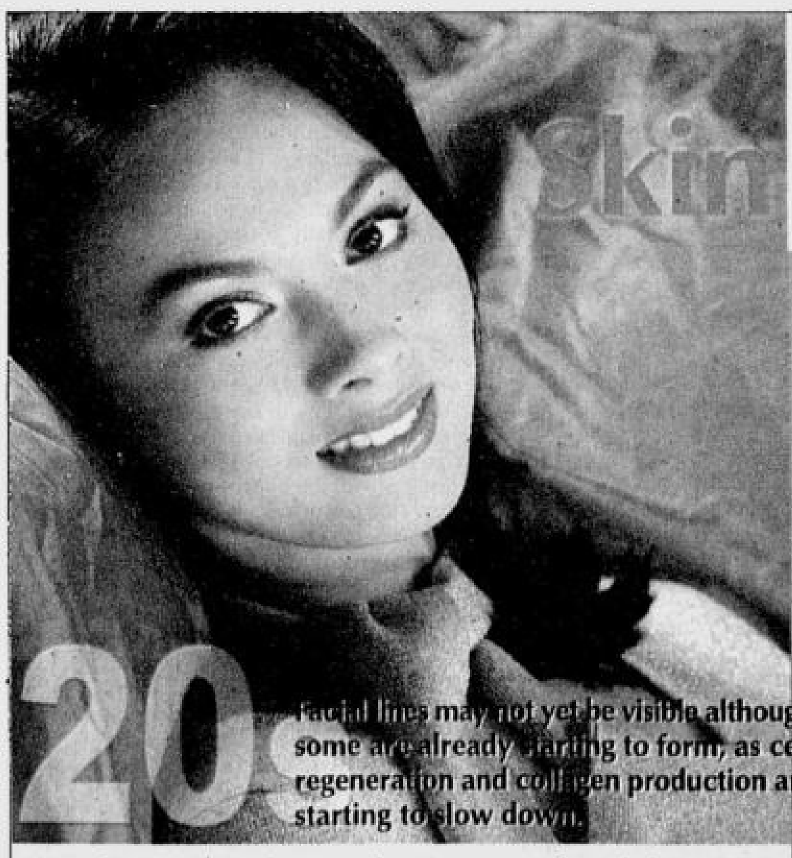

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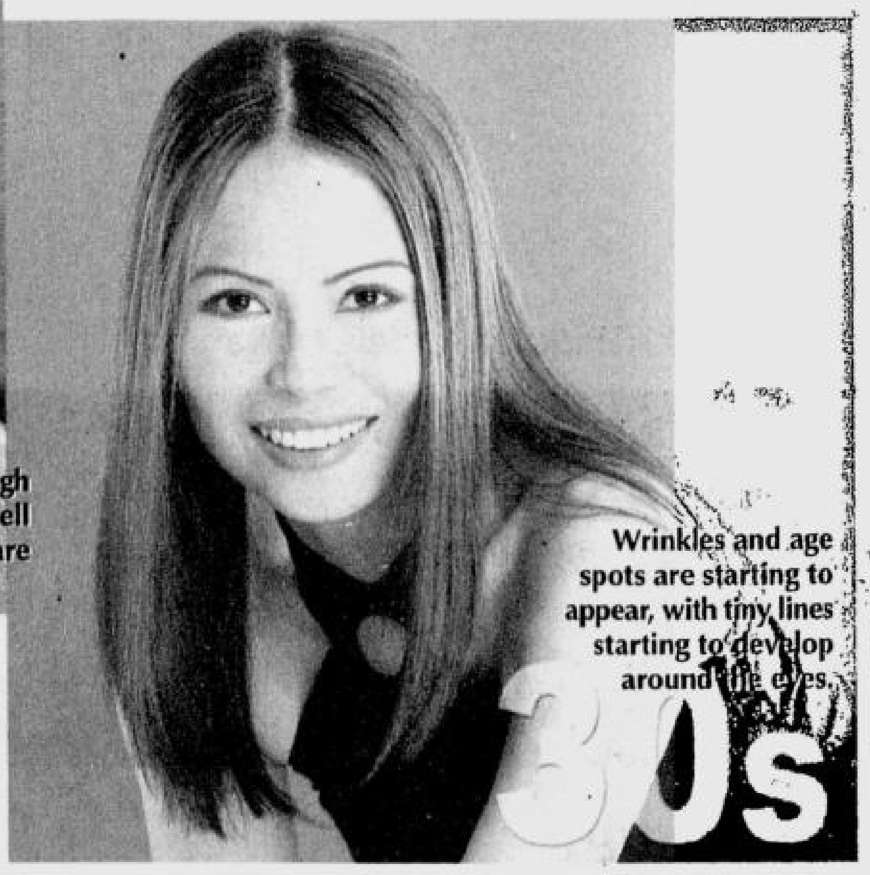

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REP Shortstoppers Chevy Mercado, Hans Dimayuga, Alex Michelena and Charlie Barredo

GRADUATES of Rep workshops value the meaning of hard work, discipline and commitment to their craft.

CARA Barredo, Timmy Sta. Maria, Mazie Cajucom, Alex Michelena, Charlie Barredo, Chevy Mercado, Hans Dimayuga, Eric Mercado, CAmille Cabrera and Denise Laurel

From workshoppers to pros

(From page E1)

experiences." Charlie always comes to auditions extremely well-prepared, and locks herself up in her room to study her audition songs.

Timmy Sta. Maria, 13

"Theater is fun," said Timmy. "It's where I get to meet people who are *masarap kasama*. I want to be a serious actor like Tito Miguel (Faustmann). For my college course, I want to take theater arts or communication arts."

Sizing up his good looks, I asked him if he wanted to be a movie star. "Not yet. I have to learn the right way first. I loved being in 'Celebration III' together with the veterans. It made me feel like an adult myself," he said. Timmy is a quick study who jumped into his bit role in "Our Town" at a day's notice.

Hans Dimayuga, 12

"I learned so many things in theater, like stage presence and how to relax on stage," said Hans. "I learned to be professional, like not being late and not doing cheap tricks, '*yung baduy ba*, to attract attention."

Asked how he envisioned himself 10 years from now, he readily said, "Oh, still in Rep, of course. It's kinda hard. You go home late, do your homework and go to school. Sometimes I sleep in school during break time, or I eat rice during recess, grab a sandwich for lunch and then I sleep. My parents pick me up from school and bring me to rehearsals and wait for me." His parents' admonition as far as his studies go is "just don't flunk." Hans is in the top 10 of his class.

Mazie Cajucom, 16

"I enjoy performing and making people happy. Theater brings out the best in myself. I like rehearsals and performances. I don't like being idle or feeling lazy and because theater gives me a lot, I give it back a lot—my willingness to work and my commitment. After high school, I want to study writing. I think writing and theater go well together. I've written stories and poems and it's the same as theater. It's communication."

Alex Michelena, 11

"I don't like school that much but I have to finish it or I'll be out of theater. I love theater. I learn something new every day."

Asked if she ever got nervous, Alex said, "Well, I'm a bit nervous on opening night, but then we were taught just to have fun and not to think about mistakes."

I asked Alex, a brassy, lovable kid, if she thought she was going to be a good actress and she said, "Of course."

"What makes you think so?" I prodded.

"Because I say so. I love theater because it's so cool. People pay to watch me."

Alex's parents, Tess and Chris, are very supportive of Alex. They help her memorize by cueing her at home and her *lola* always gives her money, she said, after watching a show of hers. Her mother asked Ria to open a bank account for little Alex where all her talent fees go. Alex also thinks Julia Roberts is "super cool." Alex has done TV commercials and some movies.

Chevy Mercado, 16

He says theater gives him a "real high." Chevy thinks theater is totally different and playing different roles is the challenge. "I always read the whole play even if I only have a small part in it," said Chevy. "I research on the period in which the play takes place. I want to be a really good actor."

Chevy grew up in the United States and listened to Webber and Sondheim at the age of 9. "In the theater," he said, "responsibility and self-control are musts. There can be no fooling around. The actor has to deal with props, costumes, cues."

And in "Our Town" he's the one who leads Baby Barredo in the dark to her position while Joy Virata assigned Timmy Sta. Maria to remind her to remove her apron in one scene. Veterans trust these young actors. They are highly responsible and disciplined. Chevy is the son of show-biz personality Eddie Mercado.

Eric Mercado, 11

Eric is Chevy's younger brother. Eric said it's fun to be in theater because he loves singing. He feels great when he sings and he loves being in a show where he has a chance to act with veterans. He says he learns a lot from them and says he has mastered taking care of his grades and rehearsals at the same time.

Denise Laurel, 13

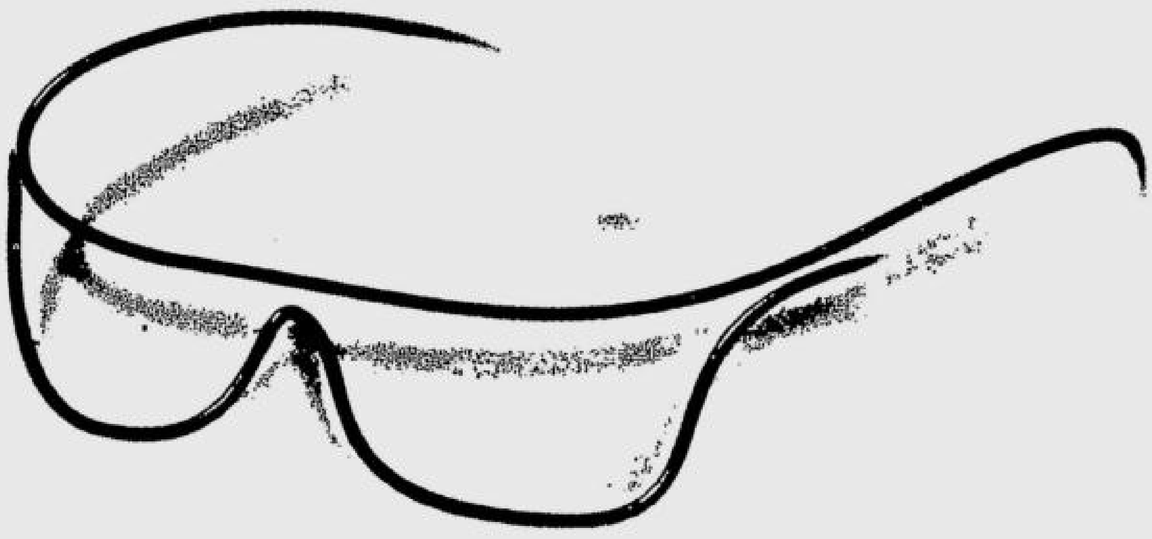
Granddaughter of Celia Laurel, Denise loves theater because it develops her "people skills." When asked what she meant by "people skills," she explained she has learned how to interact with all kinds of people and how to get along with them. Her goal, she said, is to be a very good actress and singer. She said she loves theater because she feels she makes people happy that way. She wishes more kids would join the workshops because, she said, every year she improves and can watch herself grow.

Cara Barredo, 13

"I'm in the theater," said Cara (niece of Baby Barredo), "not for the money but because I love dancing, singing and acting. Theater taught me to respect myself and others, and to balance the schedule of homework and rehearsals."

The kids have another common denominator working for all of them. They all have very supportive parents. These parents give their children roots and wings, which is a nice way of putting it, but it's no small matter when you get down to details and the nitty-gritty—transporting the kids to and from school and rehearsals, seeing to it they do their homework, watching them drink their milk and take vitamins, ensuring they get enough sleep, and over and above everything, loving them completely.

Repertory Philippines is now accepting enrollees for its Summer Theater Acting Workshop 2001. Call 633-4821 to -25



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Trumpets Playshop can make you fly

Getting immersed in the art and the discipline of theater broadens the horizons of children and develops their creativity

PLAYSHOP 2001 teachers and students

By Audie Gemora

OF STAGE

WHAT to do with kids during summer seems to be the perennial question. The question becomes even more pressing when you have such hyperactive kids that just the thought they'll be out of school for two whole months already tires you out. Or you have may have a self-conscious, painfully shy teenager who you just wish would break out of his or her shell, get out there arm interact with someone—anyone? Then again, you yourself may be professional-looking for a world broader than the corporate structure you move in... or even a homemaker dying to explore and develop your artistic inclinations.

Well, theater is your answer! I don't mean just watching it, of course, though that is a very good beginning. A great live performance—of a play, a concert, a ballet—makes an impact like no movie ever can and inspire more than any arcade game can aspire to.

What I am really talking about here is theater training... getting immersed in the art and the discipline of theater itself. Now that is not only guaranteed to keep the children out of your hair during the hot summer months but is also the perfect venue to broaden their horizons and develop their creativity.

A growing number of parents have come to realize this. Hence, the proliferation of theater workshops all over the country. For example, take Trumpets Playshop. (Please allow me my little "plug" here since I do know more about our own workshop than any other around and can therefore speak about it with some authority.)

From a modest acting class of students back in 1993, Playshop has evolved and grown at such a phenomenal rate that by last summer there were over 1,200 enrollees. This summer, we expect an even bigger number of students.

Why is that? Because we don't just keep the kids constructively occupied during the summer.

For the past seven years, Playshop has been a haven for anyone wanting to discover his/her uniqueness, an ideal venue for self-expression, a place where God-given talents are unearthed and nurtured, where artists are born and bred, taught that without the Giver in our lives, our gifts don't amount to much. A takeoff point for those who want to fly.

Something new

This is achieved by always adding something new and exciting every year. It may mean moving to more accessible venues like the malls. It may mean employing teachers who are standouts in their particular fields. And it definitely means addling new courses, making for an even more diverse curriculum.

For instance, supemodel Tweetie de Leon will conduct a course on modeling—a first not only for Playshop 2001 but for summer workshops as a whole. In this class, kids and grownups alike can learn how to pose for pictorials, do ramp modeling, act for commercials, pick up pointers on style and makeup.

There are also art lessons for kids and teens—taught by no less than production designer Mio Infante with a team of accomplished visual artists.

Playshop 2001 has also expanded its dance program. One is never too young or too old to pick up the latest moves from the mat of street dancing—Rene Sagaran, Jason and Joshua Zamora, Jonjon Supan and the rest of the Manoeuvres. James and Liesl Laforteza (formerly of Powerdance) will be teaching jazz. Together with the upcoming dance group, Gypsies, they are also introducing a one-of-a-kind course called Song and Dance where aspirants can learn to perform à la Britney Spears, Janet Jackson, N'Sync or Ricky Martin. Tying up Playshop 2001's dance program is classical ballet for kids and teens ably tutored by Venus Basas.

For those wanting to develop their singing ability, opera singer Lionel Guico, Jojo Macarambon, Annie Quintos-Uy and Sweet Plantado of the Company (no less!) will be giving voice classes.

Go Broadway

Those interested to learn the Broadway/West End style of performance where the art forms of drama, music and dance are fused, Playshop 2001 offers its ever popular musical theater course with classes for children, teens and adults to be handled by theater stalwarts Audie Gemora, Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo, Carlo Orosa, Dennis

TRUMPETS/ p. E7

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3rd Prize - MICROWAVE OVEN 17Ltrs., TURBO BROILER, 2 in 1 GRILLER, Dual ELECTRIC AIRPOT 3.2 Ltrs., 16" DESK FAN, VACUUM CLEANER, Dual System WATER PURIFIER, FLAT IRON, PANCAKE MAKER, OVEN TOASTER, CROCK POT, 8 Speed BLENDER, DISH DRYER and Rechargeable HALOGEN SEARCHLIGHT

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Cecile Licad returns to CCP on April 6

By Pablo A. Tariman

AS I await Cecile Licad's return engagement at the CCP on April 6 with Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, I couldn't help but recall the last time I heard the concerto in the mid-'80s. One can only remember the wild applause at the CCP Main Theater and the surge of well-wishers at the Green Room. Licad was in a revealing Pitoy Moreno gown and, backstage, I was momentarily stunned by the long line of well-wishers that included filmmaker Marilou Diaz-Abaya, actresses Charito Solis and Dina Bonnevie who, at the time, were involved in a movie about the life and times of Filipino musicians. Bonnevie was to play the role of a pianist and in preparation for that part, she watched Licad's rehearsals of Rach 2 with the PPO.

(Nothing happened to that Regal movie but Diaz-Abaya may resurrect her aborted music film with a future project on child prodigies.)

I remember that Licad, swamped by autograph-seekers, handed me the score of the Rachmaninoff concerto as she made her way to the post-concert reception. With the score in my custody, I jokingly told Irene M. Araneta: "Now I hold Rachmaninoff on the palm of my hand."

Rach 2, as the concerto is popularly called, is, of course, a favorite graduation warhorse of music students. It is also an often-played concerto in many concert seasons.

Indeed, it was often played that when prize-winning Chinese pianist Li Jan was about to play it with the visiting Taiwan Symphony at the Metropolitan Theater, I told him Rach 2 was the country's other national anthem.

How do we reckon with Licad's return to Rach 2?

When Licad played Rach for the first time in the United States, American critics decided she owned the piece. "Not only did she have the technique to master anything Rachmaninoff threw in her path," one wrote, "she exhibited a marriage of artistic depth and control that brought sensual shape and vivid color to the surface of the thousand notes."

While we get many versions of Rach 2, it is obvious that Licad's Rach 2 will be special and not the beaten kind.

As of late, the Internet music authority lists Licad as one of the four supreme interpreters of Rachmaninoff concertos, the other three being Rachmaninoff by Rachmaninoff, Rachmaninoff by Van Cliburn and Rachmaninoff by Gary Graffman (played live in Manila at the PICC under Redentor Romero).

While her Chopin is the rave of Chopin specialists in Poland (she won the Grand Prix Du Disque Frederic Chopin for the F Minor Chopin Concerto under the baton of Andre Previn leading the London Philharmonic), it was in Rachmaninoff No. 2 that she first jolted Manila critics and went on to conquer her first concert audiences in Philadelphia.

I heard Licad's Rach 2 in Legazpi City in 1975 with her mother, Rosario Licad, on the second piano at the St. Agnes Academy. In 1974, she played it earlier with the CCP Philharmonic (now PPO) under the late Luis Valencia, and Manila's critics at the time were unanimous in their reviews.

Lito Molina, then writing for Business Day, wrote: "Cecile projected a tone, phrasing and feeling that one—who was twice or thrice her age—may find difficult to approximate."

Rosalinda L. Orosa noted that at age 12, Licad could weave circles around most of her adult confreres in this country.

Licad's foreign odyssey with Rach 2 had triumphant highlights.

Through this concerto, she got her first standing ovation in Philadelphia and her first rave review from New York Times' Harold Schonberg in a performance with Boston Symphony under Seiji Ozawa. Her first recording was also Rach 2 with Claudio Abbado, and it landed the month's best recording (July 1984) in Stereo Review.

LICAD

Three years ago in a flight back to Manila from Cebu, I approached a Russian conductor named Andrei Boreyko, who stunned Cebu's music lovers in a performance of Beethoven's Pastorale Symphony, and asked him if he knew Cecile Licad (at the time I was scouting around for a conductor who could wield the baton for Rach 3 as PPO's Barbieri was busy with Verdi's "Requiem"). Not only did he know Licad. He conducted her in Germany in a performance of, yes, Rachmaninoff No. 2.

As I was sorting out clippings of Licad's worldwide press notices, I came across a review in a German newspaper mentioning the names of Licad and Boreyko in a performance of Rach 2.

When she plays the C Minor concerto again, I expect a total distillation of the piece under an interpreter who has evolved as a person and as an artist.

I am not surprised that when Chicago critic Robert Marsh heard her first Rach 2 many years back, he concluded: "Cecile Licad is one of the great flaming talents that comes along one or two times in every generation and she can produce a soaring tone from the piano in the class of Rachmaninoff himself."

In the eyes of the adoring public from Manila to Legazpi, Cebu, Zambales and Dumaguete and on to New York, Tokyo, Poland and Monaco, Licad is a national and universal artist. She doesn't need CCP or NCCA approval to get the title. Trouble is, in this country, you confer awards only if the nominees are in the twilight of their lives.

And what we get now are national lobbyists, not National Artists.

Here and there

OUR condolence to the family of conductor Redentor Romero who passed away on March 28 right after the closing concert of the National Philharmonic Society. Those spontaneous standing ovations for Alexander Tomescu and conductor Herminigildo Ranera were also for the late conductor who managed to mount a superb concert even on his deathbed. More on the life and times of Maestro Romero next week.

* * *

Katherine Dayrit Fernandez of the Abueva Class of the Philippine High School for the Arts had her graduation recital yesterday at the UP College of Music. She will study with Reynaldo Reyes in Baltimore after graduation. A valedictorian when she graduated at the Philippine High School for the Arts, she is a candidate for cum laude honors. She is related to the musically gifted musicians, Amelita Guevara and Carmen Padilla.

* * *

Remember the Romanian diva, Nelly Miricioiu, who had electrifying concerts at the CCP and at the Metropolitan Theater in the early '80s? She had electrifying debuts in Covent Garden ("Pagliacci" opposite Jon Vickers), La Scala ("Lucia di Lammermoor"), Metropolitan Opera ("Boheme" opposite Richard Leech), Quevedo, Spain ("Boheme" opposite Placido Domingo), Kennedy Center ("La Traviata"), Frankfurt Opera ("La Traviata" opposite Alfredo Kraus and "Boheme" opposite Otoniel Gonzaga), San Francisco Opera ("La Traviata") and Glasgow Opera ("Manon Lescaut"), among others. When pianist-harpist Lourdes de Leon Gregorio went to the Netherlands, she saw La Miricioiu on TV. She will be heard again on April 20 and 22 at the George Washington University in Bellini's "Il Pirata." For tickets, call (202) 364-5826.

* * *

Cecile Licad arrives Wednesday for her Friday engagement with the PPO under Ruggero Barbieri. She flies back to New York two days after. Chopin fanatics are lamenting that she can't do an all-Chopin recital after Rachmaninoff No. 2. She will be heard again on Aug. 17 with the Asian Symphony and hopefully an all-Chopin recital at the Philamlife Theater at year's end.

* * *

After "Don Giovanni," CCP attempts another Mozart opera in "Bastien and Bastienne" on April 24 at the CCP Little Theater. I hope this is given wider and literate publicity considering that the opera is nearly extinct in Manila's music scene.

* * *

SM Supermalls through Gantimpala Theater Foundation under Tony Espejo offers a wide range of workshops for interested theater aficionados. Former workshoppers include Ricky Davao, Julio Diaz and Timmy Cruz, among others. For inquiries, call 895-8314.

AUDITIONS FOR 'CINDERELLA'

Repertory Philippines Children's Theater is holding auditions for the musical "Cinderella" by Jim Eiler and Jeanne Bargy at the William J. Shaw Theater (5/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Edsa, Mandaluyong City). All amateur and professional actors, aged 16 and above, are invited. Call 633-4821 to 25.

Emperor of piano

By Antonio C. Hila

PIANIST Ariel Dechosa wowed Manila music lovers with his Piano Concerto No. 5, posthumously subtitled "Emperor," at CCP's Little Theatre recently during the PPO's fifth concert of the current season. His tandem with conductor Josefino "Chino" Toledo, who wielded the baton, was a pleasant buenamano to the rest of the PPO's concerts for the New Year.

Dechosa simply stunned the audience. He brought out the elegance and majesty of the piece in a very relaxed manner, affording his listeners a moment for enjoyment. As soon as the orchestra had played the first chord, one could feel his striking presence, playing the decorative arpeggios in strict rhythm, never retarding the notes in the measure before the orchestra struck the tutti chord again. In other words, he refused to romanticize his playing, avoiding to sound pompous, and instead opted for an expansive, continuous phrasing. It is just unfortunate that in the recapitulation section, the tutti chord of the orchestra noticeably came later than the pianist.

Admittedly, the interplay between Dechosa and the orchestra in the first movement was impeccable as the pianist, and the PPO, under the baton of Chino Toledo, tossed themes back and forth and carried the repartee with lively spirit. While the music was actually symphonic than soloistic, Dechosa made such an impact as his debonair tones palpably towered above the orchestra in loud passages. His dynamics were well nuanced. There was absolutely no struggle on his part to be heard. Even in the soft passages where the orchestra sounded quite loud, his tones shimmered. And if the big tones were full bodied, so were the soft tones. Unmistakably, it was his solid technique that enabled him to project brilliant tones as well as floating soft ones. This is actually one of those rare moments I enjoy during a piano concerto where the pianist successfully showcase the dynamics of the piece.

Moreover, Dechosa's palette of colors was extremely rich that it brings forth the work's abounding blaze of splendor. And the sound he carved out from the piano was simply arresting: Ringing, singing and full, never forced out, to give a caressing, ravishing texture. This he had shown in the solo passage or cadenza toward the end where the composer taxed more the pianist's musical ability rather than virtuosity. When the horns picked up the melody, the pianist made those arresting embellishments, and together with the orchestra, brought out the grandeur of the piece.

ARIEL Dechosa

In the second movement, pianist Dechosa and conductor Toledo were now in perfect rapport. Their partnership brought serenity after a furious yet cleansing storm that was heard in the first movement. Indeed, one felt an imposing, assuring repose. The elegance was simply soothing.

But even if this lovely second movement ceased, the music did not stop and the rondo theme was triumphantly sounded, all paced in a scherzino or playful manner. It was pure pleasantness as pianist and conductor maintained rapport. They fused their wits and made their dialogue wholesome and agreeable. The majesty, brilliance and, of course, virtuosity bring out the moving nobility of the piece.

The applause that greeted the pianist and orchestra at the end was as big as the performance itself. Dechosa had to acknowledge several calls, after sharing the initial applause with Toledo and the PPO. The long, hearty applause obviously asked for an encore. The pianist warmly acknowledged the audience's warm reception but refused to give an encore. Strictly speaking, I think it was just proper for pianist Dechosa not to give an encore. After all, it was the PPO's concert of which he was only the featured soloist.

On the podium, Chino Toledo had once again proven his mettle as conductor. We congratulate the PPO for including a Filipino work, Ramon Santos' L'Bad, which afforded the listeners a novel aural experience. One was practically overwhelmed by the rich tapestries of sound the work evoked in arresting colors and different duration.

No doubt, Dechosa is one of the country's major world-class talents. We just hope he would be given more opportunities to perform here for the listening pleasure of his countrymen. A live recording of his recital for the Filipino Artists Series done at the Little Theatre on Aug. 24, 1999 is now available on a CD recording produced by the CCP.

More piano concerts

A WEEK after the PPO concert, the Yamaha Showroom on Buendia Avenue featured three piano performances organized by the Salvador and Pilar Sala Foundation Inc. with San Miguel Corp. and the Yupangco Music Corp. Dubbed "A Romantic Piano Concerto Journey," the concerts of Ingrid Sala Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes were part of the continuing audience development program of the Peace Philharmonic Philippines (PPP).

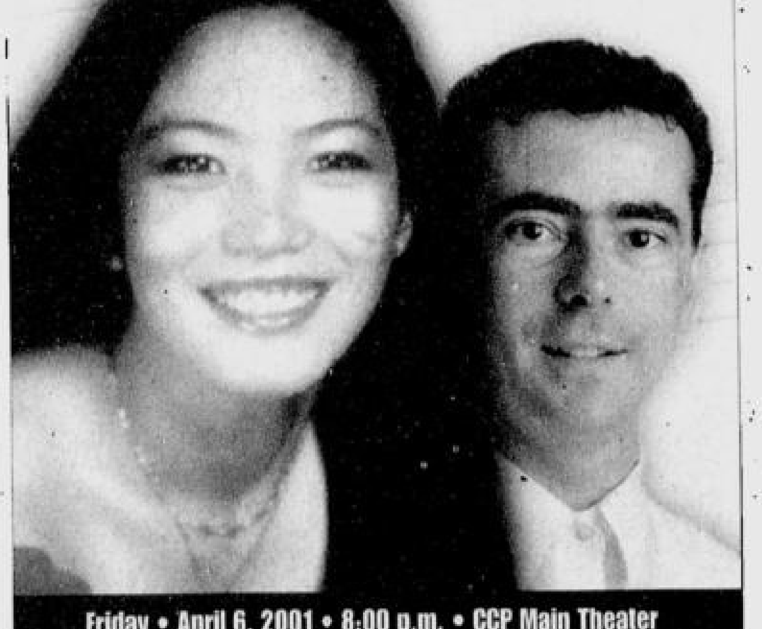
The program started with Prof. Reynaldo Reyes' talk on the development of the concerto. After each rendition, a discussion was held. The duo played the concerti of Schumann, Concerto in A Minor, Op 54; Grieg, Concerto in A Minor, Op.16, and Tchaikovsky, Concerto No. 1 in B Flat Minor. Ingrid played on piano one and Reynaldo on piano two.

The performance was such a marathon and, of course, a sumptuous feast. But apart from pleasurable listening, the audience had the chance to interact with the performers during the Q&A portion. I simply admired the stamina of both pianists, but more so their sterling performance. I had heard Ingrid played these concerti with the PPP in Cebu and I cannot but commend her glowing transformation. She has become more assertive and articulate, and her touch has more élan and dynamism. Her tone has more body now. These were demonstrated in the lyrical passages of the Schumann and the Tchaikovsky concerti, and ravishingly done in the Grieg concerto.

Her stance oozed with confidence, and with her patrician bearing, the listener was not only delighted with her aural rendition but also with the visual impact she cut on stage. Admirable, too, was the support afforded by Professor Reyes, whom Ingrid acknowledged as her mentor who was greatly responsible for what she is now as a concert pianist.

Truly, Reyes has become an "icon" in piano music. For some decades now, he has been visiting the country annually, and has given impressive performances and master classes and lessons to both aspiring piano students and mentors. Apart from pointing out informative background and technical considerations on the three concerti, he also imparted an equally important point for the aspiring concert pianist: Listening to the sound the pianist is creating from the piano, instead of just playing. Thus he stressed the point that music is indeed aural. This should be an admonition on aspiring pianists who seem to get carried away with their playing, leaving out the other important aspect of listening to the sound being produced.

Reyes underscored the fact that even in the art of accompaniment, especially in the concerto, one has to approximate the sound of the orchestral instrument a passage is particularly written for. In short, Reyes encourages pianists to understand the particular idea the music is based on to be able to vividly portray it in their playing. Obviously, he was implying that plain intuition is no better substitute to a clear, intelligent understanding of the piece.



Cultural Center of the Philippines
PRESENTS
Cecile Licad
World-Renowned Filipino pianist
WITH
The Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra
UNDER THE BATON OF
Maestro Ruggero Barbieri

Rachmaninoff
Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, op.18

"Not surprisingly, she had the notes in her agile fingers, but she had something more, which the audience responded to with a shouting ovation... Miss Licad came across as an appealing combination of fragile grace and fiery power, either of which she could call on when the music required."
– The New York Times (New York Philharmonic/Zubin Mehta)

"She approached it [Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2] with deliberate tempos, warming the lyrical currents but never swooning over them, and applying exceptionally lucid fingers to its lush melodic substance."
– Chicago Tribune (Chicago Symphony/Claudio Abbado)

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE'S 'THE PERPETRATORS'

Slow slaughter of the innocents

By Cora Llamas

REVIEW

IN REVIEWING this play, I should have known better and brought a barf bag.

It's not that Dramatis Personae makes bad productions. On the contrary, given a very limited funding, small, rented auditoriums and the occasional rowdy, heckling student audiences, director Lito Casaje's company has succeeded in mounting (mostly European and American) theatrical classics in the past 10 years.

It's just that, the last time I watched a DP play coproduced with the Goethe-Institut, my stomach was literally heaving with nausea during the whole ordeal. That play was Werner Schweb's "The Lady Presidents," a masterful no-holds-barred study of disillusionment. The central metaphor in that 1998 production was, unfortunately, a toilet bowl. To illustrate the philosophy that "life was nothing more than a pile of s---," one of the characters kept cleaning the bowl and its underlying sewers, describing the details in gory, precise detail.

INCEST and child abuse are the dark themes of Dramatis Personae's newest production.

Strong stomach

"The Lady Presidents" made its point. It was the kind of play you'd never forget. But, unless you had been blessed with a stronger stomach, it was also the kind of play you wouldn't want to watch a second time.

DP's recent coproduction with the German Cultural Center, "The Perpetrators," hit rawer nerves. According to Casaje, its premiere in its native Germany had opened to a maelstrom of controversy, and playwright Thomas Jonigk was subjected to a barrage of criticisms. It's not difficult to understand why. "The Perpetrators" treaded on even dangerous ground: child abuse. It was basically a wake-up call: Kids of both sexes were being raped and physically tortured by their own parents right in their own homes, and the law and government were turning a blind eye. The few children who did go to the police were terrified into silence by authorities who were either in the payroll of these middle-class criminal parents, or were partners in the crime as well.

Given the gravity of the subject matter, Casaje went on stage before the performance, advising the audience that certain sensitivities might be offended. Along with the rest of the cast, he also held a postproduction open forum to clarify certain issues or scenes.

Horror

The horror that seeped into your mind while watching was not in the few nonconsensual abuse scenes that were played out onstage; those scenes didn't bare any flesh and the adolescent roles were performed by professional adult actors. Like all playwrights, Jonigk's main instrument to electrify his audience into indignation was his language. What the children, Petra (Angela Baes) and Paul (Giovanni Respall), bared were the suffering and the helplessness in their souls. What the perpetrator-adults—Erwin (Clay Philips), Karin (Linda Lupton), Magda (Christine Paloma) and Karl (Manuel Aquino)—flaunted was their monstrosity and perversion.

The First Act opens with Paul alone in a hospital bed, talking about his despair. He doesn't sound desperate; the coldness and brittle flatness in his tone is one grim monologue of resignation. The following scenes introduce us to the families indulging this underground crime. To cast off the dark cloud that opened the First Act, Jonigk rightly introduces the element of farce into the situations.

Finally Karin gets angry at hubby Erwin for having sex with their daughter Petra. Why? Because his messy semen has dirtied their impeccably neat carpet. After examining the bruises of Paul, the indignant lady doctor (Joann Boyles) gives his mother Magda the advice she needs: Use this device, not that; it turns out that the doctor is also a perpetrator in her own home. Suave lawyer Karl can't understand the public outcry rising against child abuse; after all, his parents brought him up to "love them"—which he did in all joy, and is now teaching his daughters to do the same.

Sick

It's sick, all right. Fortunately, the seasoned cast plays the comic angle expertly, using the surface humor to heighten the horror. It's the self-righteousness of the perpetrators that really bring in the nausea. Jonigk makes his adult characters describe their affairs explicitly. And the words, more than any onstage portrayal, drive the knife home. These parents warp their kids' bodies because they have warped minds. They feel justified in forcing the sex on the kids, because of their needs: a widow's loneliness, a frigid wife, fear of commitment and so on. And when they equate the child abuse with love, you know these characters have no chance for redemption.

In the end, the parents meet their deserved end, gassed by unknown factors during a bacchanalia. Casaje admitted he added this execution. The original script supposedly ends with the scene of vulture adults circling embattled kids who have been abandoned by the law.

Either way, the ending stayed—and will stay—with you to the end. I was glad when I finally left the dark auditorium. Somehow, I felt suffocated inside and I needed the air to breathe. On the way home, I encountered a lot of kids—some happy ones driving with their dads and moms through a hamburger franchise, and ragged others poking at the garbage. In a hostile world full of unknowns where they are all too vulnerable, I had a glimpse of their terrible fragility.

GIOVANNI Respall and Christine Paloma are the incestuous mother and son in Dramatis Personae's production of Thomas Jonigk's "Perpetrators."

Palawan celebrates 3rd Pagdiwata Arts Festival

AS a tribute to the indigenous Pala'wan community, the 3rd Kamarikutan Pagdiwata Arts Festival has just opened in Puerto Princesa City with a basal or gong music traditionally played for feasts to honor the Master of Rice.

No less than Gawad Manlilikha awardee and National Living Treasure Masinu Intaray led the gong ensemble, along with prominent tribal leaders Jose Rilla and Jose Apol. In the basal, gong music resonated as rice cakes were prepared and shared with the community.

The week-long festival on April 1-8 features 16 workshops to be facilitated by artists from various organizations throughout the country.

Among the workshops are cartooning by Pol Medina Jr. of Pugad Baboy fame, printmaking and solar/watercolor painting by Bencab and the Tam-awan Village Artists, Film Appreciation by Ed Cabagnot of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pala'wan Syllabary by Antonita Bibas, Shadow Play by Diokno Pasilan, Pala'wan and Tagbanua basketry by Sumbia Sugpun and Digna Galinato, Candle Making by Kaye Sales, Dance Theater by Hans Christian Wagner, Basic Drawing by Susan Sales-Tupas, papier maché by Mario Lubrico Jr. and Ting Cristales, drumming by Mike Tupas, pastel drawing by Jonathan Benitez, tie dye by Rollee Gutierrez and Aura-Soma by Paula Sani.

Evenings are filled with performances in theater, dance and music, as well as poetry readings and artists' talks. A visual art exhibit titled "Salubongang Alon" has opened, while the Tam-awan Village Artists of Baguio City will perform the Pat-ong today. Homegrown artists' groups Teatro Iskwela and Ungsod will display their musical and theatrical talent on April 4 and 5.

The drummers of Mitu's Tribe beat the heat on April 3 while Austrian choreographer Hans Christian Wagner is transformed into the Dancin' Man on April 6. Palawan-based women writers Jane Timbancaya-Urbanek, Ma. Agnes O. Prieto and Susan Evangelista also share their craft and launch a book on April 6. Just like festivals past, a lot of spontaneous jamming is expected every night.

Inspired by Palawan's rich culture, the first arts festival in 1999 celebrated the growth of the arts in the province with the Pagdiwata, the Tagbanua thanksgiving ritual for good harvest. Festival organizer Galeri Kamarikutan named the arts festival after the ritual to signify the rich harvest that Palawan continues to reap from artists who flock to the province and share their talent with the community.

Visit Galeri Kamarikutan, Rizal Avenue extension, Puerto Princesa City or call (48) 433-5182/9088 or e-mail kamarikutan@yahoo.com

Ballet Philippines holds workshop

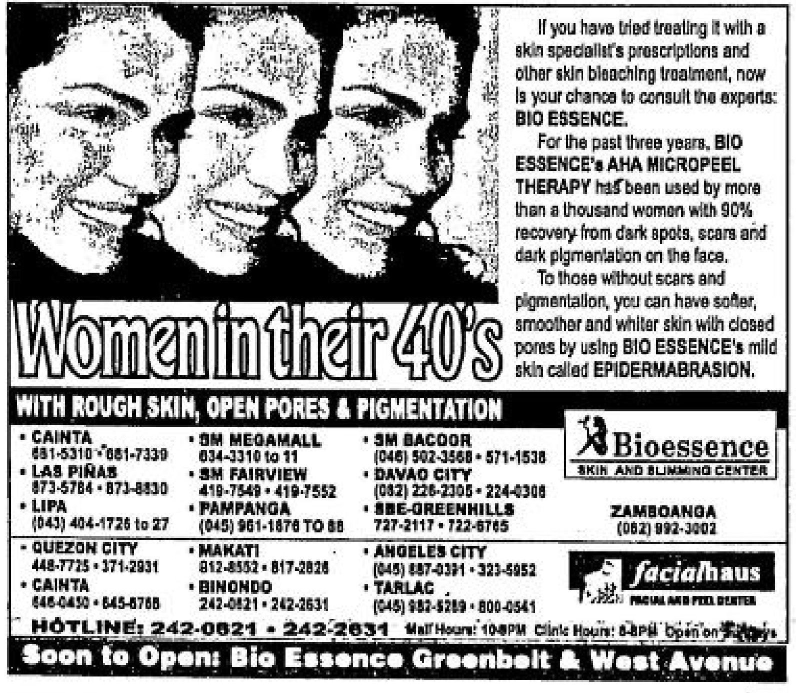
THE 32ND CCP Summer Dance Workshop is a five-week intensive dance training for students, from ages 4 up, in classical ballet, modern dance, jazz, character dance, repertoire, partnering, improvisation and/or composition, mime and other dance related disciplines.

The faculty is composed of professional dance artists of Ballet Philippines who are well versed in both classical and modern dance genres.

The Summer Dance Workshop Recital-Showcase will feature "A Garden Tale: A Day in the Life of a Garden," an original Filipino environmental theatrical ballet that centers on true and old-fashioned values, Filipino games played by children and childhood memories of provincial life: summer dance workshop (Annette Cruz Mariano), concept and choreography (Noordin Jumalon), music (Leroy Anderson), costume (Dennis Maristany).

A scholarship audition will be held today, April 2, 5 p.m., at the CCP Rehearsal Hall.

SDW classes open on April 3 and culminate in a showcase/recital on May 12 and 13, 3 p.m., at the CCP Main Theater.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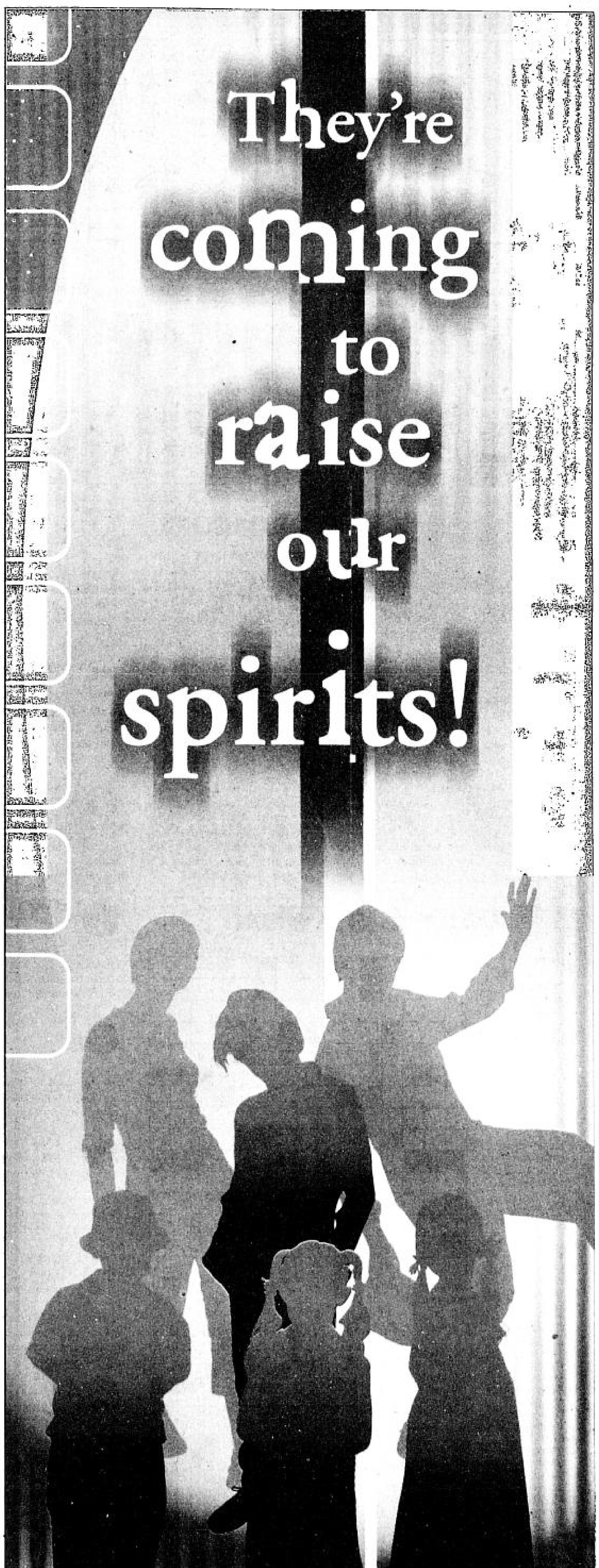
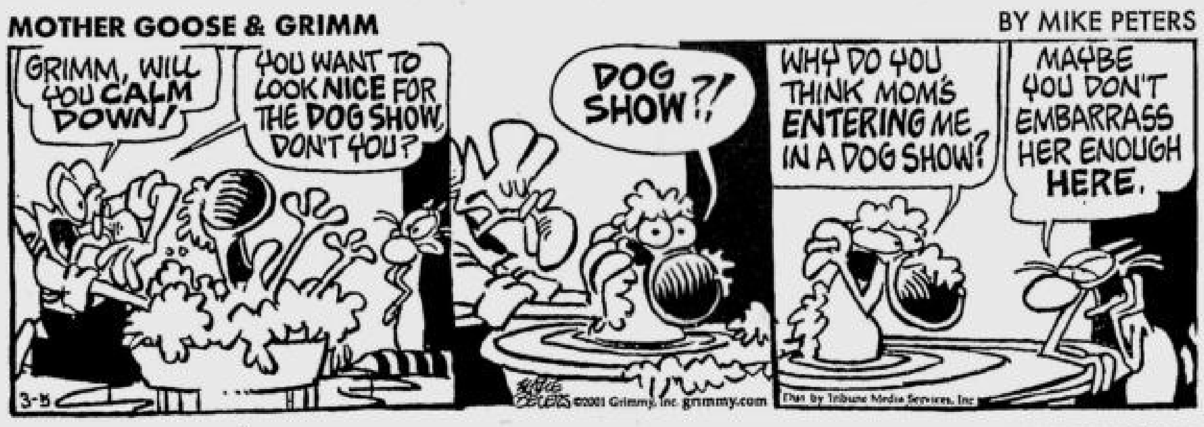


MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


GRIMM, WILL YOU CALM DOWN!
YOU WANT TO LOOK NICE FOR THE DOG SHOW, DON'T YOU?
DOG SHOW?!
WHY DO YOU THINK MOM'S ENTERING ME IN A DOG SHOW?
MAYBE YOU DON'T EMBARRASS HER ENOUGH HERE.
3-5
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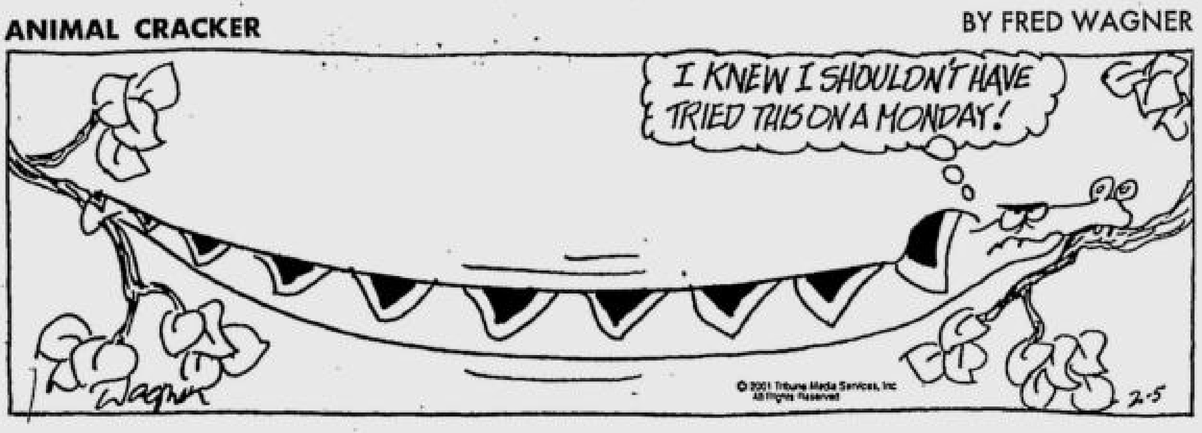
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE TRIED THIS ON A MONDAY!
Wagner
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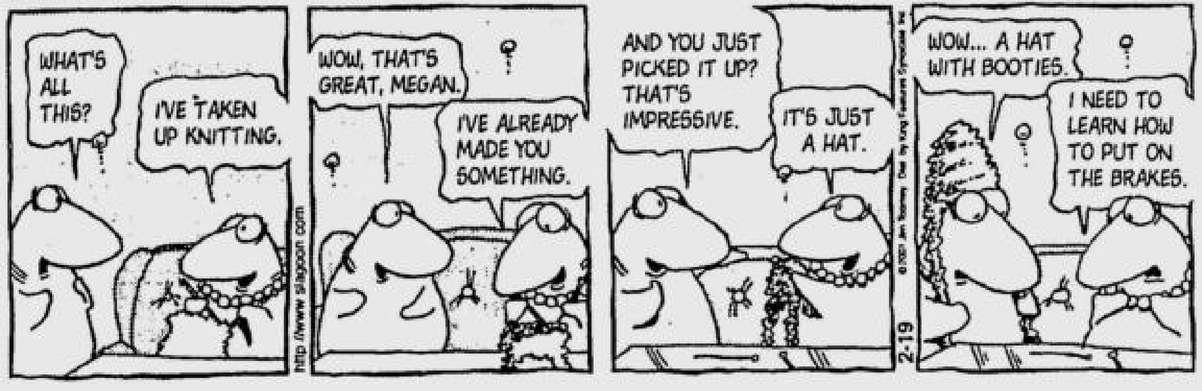
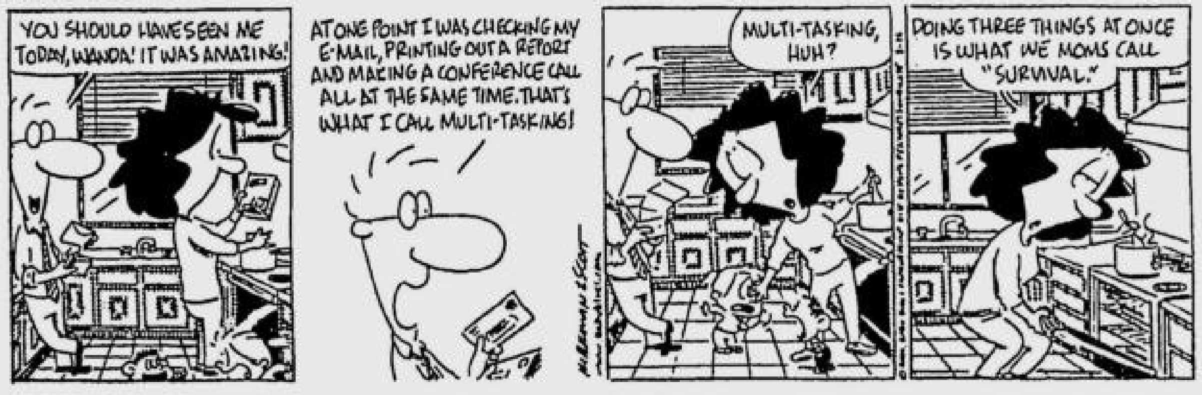
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


WHAT'S ALL THIS?
I'VE TAKEN UP KNITTING.
http://www.slagoon.com
WOW, THAT'S GREAT, MEGAN.
I'VE ALREADY MADE YOU SOMETHING.
AND YOU JUST PICKED IT UP? THAT'S IMPRESSIVE.
IT'S JUST A HAT.
2-19
WOW... A HAT WITH BOOTIES.
I NEED TO LEARN HOW TO PUT ON THE BRAKES.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN ME TODAY, WANDA! IT WAS AMAZING!
AT ONE POINT I WAS CHECKING MY E-MAIL, PRINTING OUT A REPORT AND MAKING A CONFERENCE CALL ALL AT THE SAME TIME. THAT'S WHAT I CALL MULTI-TASKING!
MULTI-TASKING, HUH?
DOING THREE THINGS AT ONCE IS WHAT WE MOMS CALL "SURVIVAL."

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Sir Alec Guinness, Emmylou Harris, Linda Hunt, Marvin Gaye, Jack Webb, Penelope Keith, Pamela Reed, Billy Dean

Happy Birthday: This is your year to turn on the charm and attract interest both professionally and personally. You will hold the attention of those with whom you come in contact. You will feel stronger, confident and ready to conquer the world. Set your goals high, push yourself to the limit, and you will surpass your wildest dreams. Your numbers: 15, 23, 25, 29, 32, 33

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your anger will be impossible to contain if you get into heated discussions with family members. Direct your energy into physical work rather than discord. Be productive.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Romantic involvement will lead to a serious union. You should make plans that concern your future together. Travel should be on your agenda.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Problems that older relatives face will become your dilemma. Try to do what you can to help, but don't let their troubles disrupt your personal life. If you lend money, you won't get it back.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Plan carefully if you want to dodge the obstacles that others have put in your way. You've taken on too much, and now you're going to have to become a juggler to meet your deadlines.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't be too vocal about your intentions. Colleagues may try to pass the buck by putting the blame on you for a poorly done job. Pay attention to details and keep your boss informed as you go along.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't push your luck when dealing with friends or children. Your criticism may not be taken too well. This is not the time to be negative. The backlash will put you in a lonely position.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Your nerves are shot and your patience deteriorating. It's time to make changes to turn your life around. Residential moves may be necessary if you wish to eliminate the problem.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You need to put the spark back into your life. Things have become stale, and you need to regenerate yourself with new information. Start doing some avid reading or sign up for courses.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Chronic health problems are likely to surface if you are ignoring your problems. Get proper medical attention and confront the situation that is causing all the stress.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Romantic connections can be made if you open your eyes and recognize that special person watching you from a distance. You need to start enjoying life a little more.

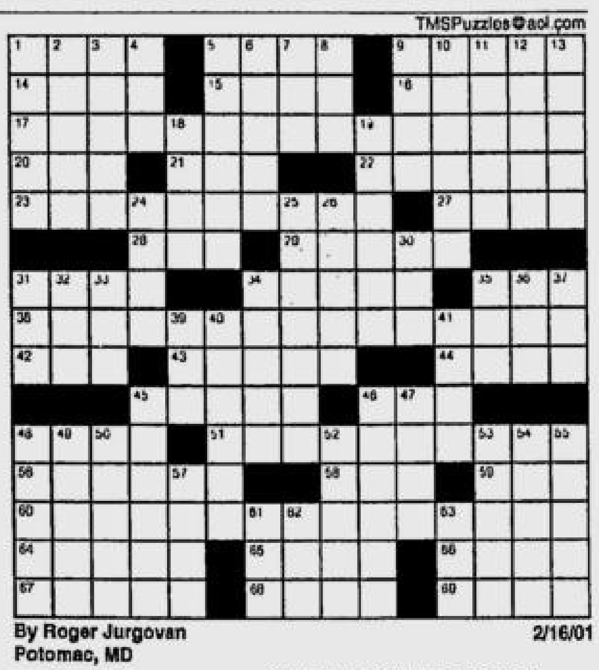
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Your disciplined approach to work will bring praise from those in higher positions. Don't be afraid to present your ideas or go after your goals. The time to get ahead is now.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your need to experience different cultures and philosophies will lead you to sign up for unusual courses being offered in your community.

Birthday Baby: You are dependable, stable and willing to do whatever you can to pitch in and help. You're a lively contributor and a giving individual who will gain respect and approval from those you encounter throughout life.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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By Roger Jurgovan
Potomac, MD

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5 Middle East sultanate
9 Artist Picasso
14 __ vera
15 Heavy cord
16 Walt Disney's middle name
17 Flimflammer's assurance
20 Org. of Jets
21 __ Paulo
22 Conductor Ormandy
23 Dupe's dream of comfort
27 Jason's galley
28 Fujairah, Dubai et al.
29 Mr. Arafat
31 Run smoothly
34 Slangy refusal
35 Spherical vegetable
38 Dupe's wife's warning
42 Small viper
43 Company images
44 Charles Lamb
45 Change to fit
46 That woman
48 Rotary-phone feature
51 Dupe's words of woe
56 Unpigmented
58 Ventilate
59 Period
60 Flimflammer's parting words
64 Caper
65 Observe
66 Mr. Knievel
67 Twangy
68 Fling
69 Gainsay

DOWN

1 Golfer Stewart
2 Hilo hi
3 Spiritual natures
4 Stitch up
5 Flowery
6 Word before oil or pool
7 4 of dates
8 French born
9 Lima's country
10 Sour mash
11 Mosquito or flea, at times
12 "Knots" author
13 Start of a path?
18 Greek mount
19 Influences adversely
24 Mongol tent
25 Blight on the landscape
26 Works for
30 Shakespearean contraction
31 Sch. grp.
32 Sounds of uncertainty
33 GOP member
34 Israeli desert
35 D.C. old-timer
36 Actor Wallach
37 Nabokov book
39 __ Saints' Day
40 Medicated liquid
41 Young adult
45 Actress Silverstone
46 Fishing nets
47 Roll-call call
48 Israeli hero Moshe
49 Entertainer Massey
50 Touches up against
52 Lures
53 Lift and toss
54 "Over the Rainbow" composer
55 Waste time
57 Salty letters?
61 Explosive letters
62 Court
63 Eur. sea

SATURDAY PUZZLE ANSWER

R	A	R	E		O	B	O	E		D	A	T	U	M
O	L	A	V		A	R	K	S		A	T	O	N	E
M	A	K	E	A	F	A	S	T	P	R	O	F	I	T
P	R	I	N	T		S	H	E	A		M	U	T	E
			S	T	O	W		O	S	L	O			
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T	H	E	S	K	Y	S	T	H	E	L	I	M	I	T
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				S	L	A	W		T	A	M	E		
S	L	I	D		A	R	O	O		P	A	T	H	S
T	A	K	E	I	T	O	R	L	E	A	V	E	I	T
O	N	E	N	D		S	K	A	T		E	L	K	E
P	E	S	T	O		E	S	N	E		N	Y	E	T

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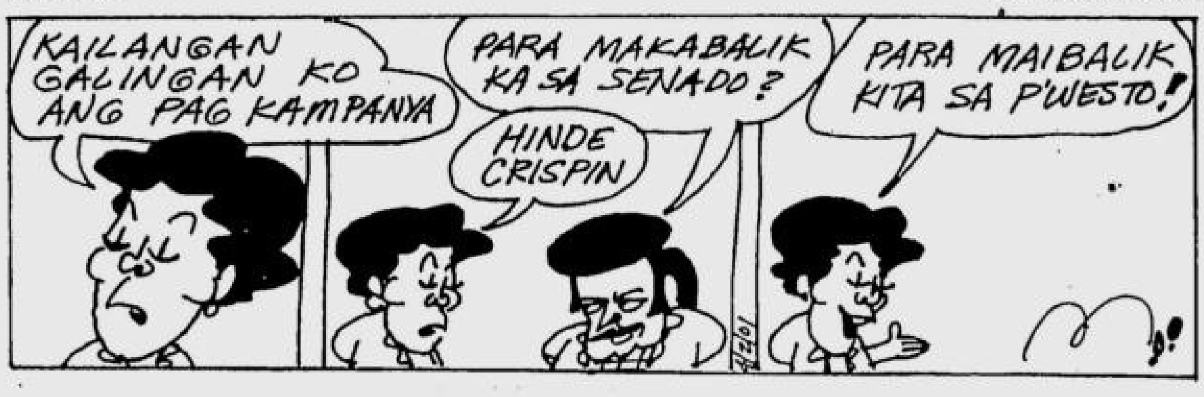
2/16/01

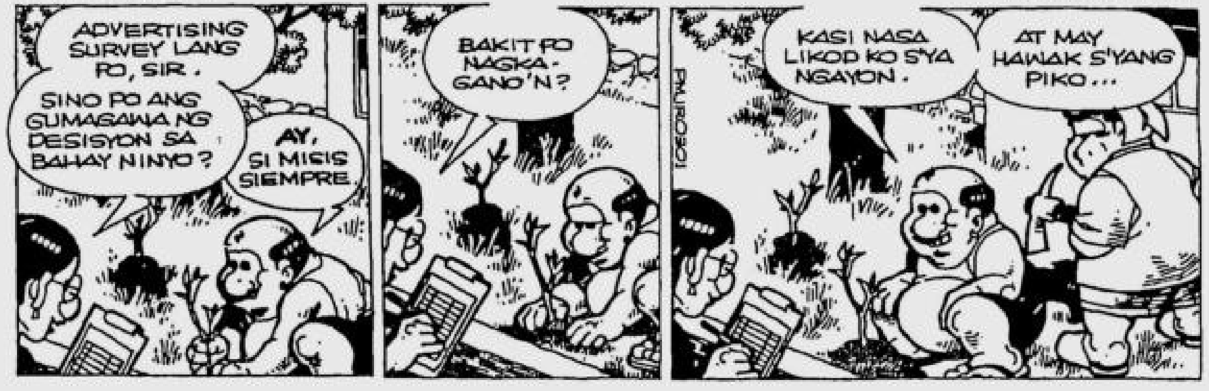
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KAILANGAN GALINGAN KO ANG PAG KAMPANYA
PARA MAKABALIK KA SA SENADO?
HINDE CRISPIN
PARA MAIBALIK KITA SA P'WESTO!

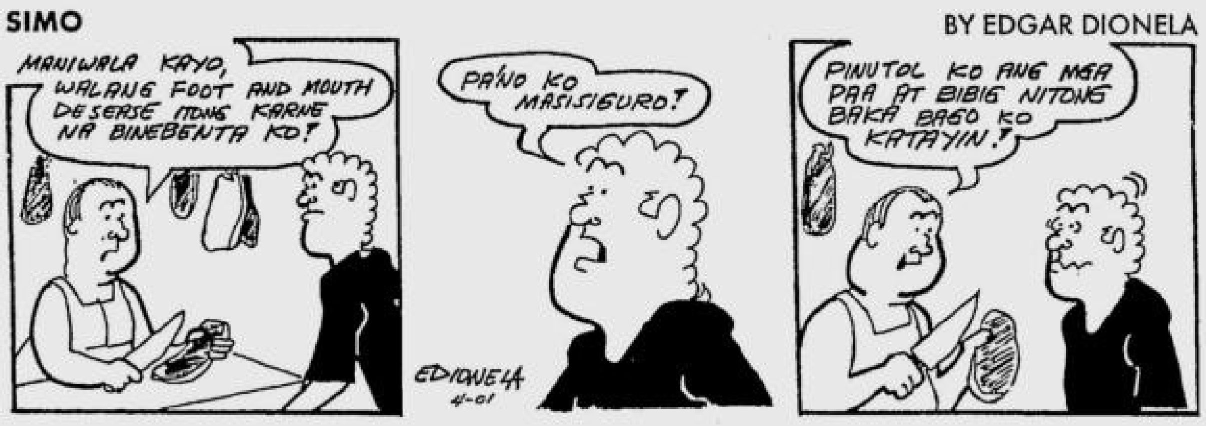
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ADVERTISING SURVEY LANG PO, SIR.
SINO PO ANG GUMAGAWA NG DESISYON SA BAHAY NINYO?
AY, SI MISIS SIEMPRE.
BAKIT PO NAGKA-GANO'N?
KASI NASA LIKOD KO S'YA NGAYON.
AT MAY HAWAK S'YANG PIKO...

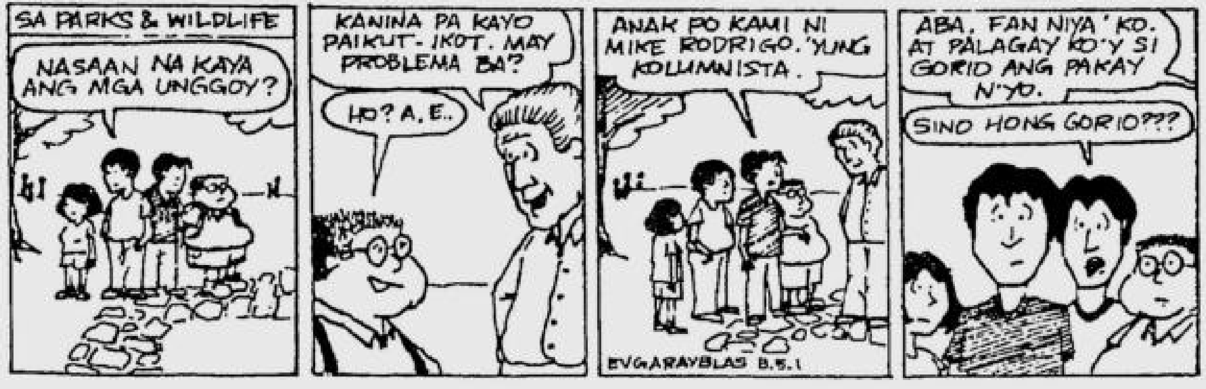
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


MANIWALA KAYO, WALANG FOOT AND MOUTH DESEASE ITONG KARNE NA BINEBENTA KO!
PA'NO KO MASISIGURO?
EDIONELA 4-01
PINUTOL KO ANG MGA PAA AT BIBIG NITONG BAKA BAGO KO KATAYIN.

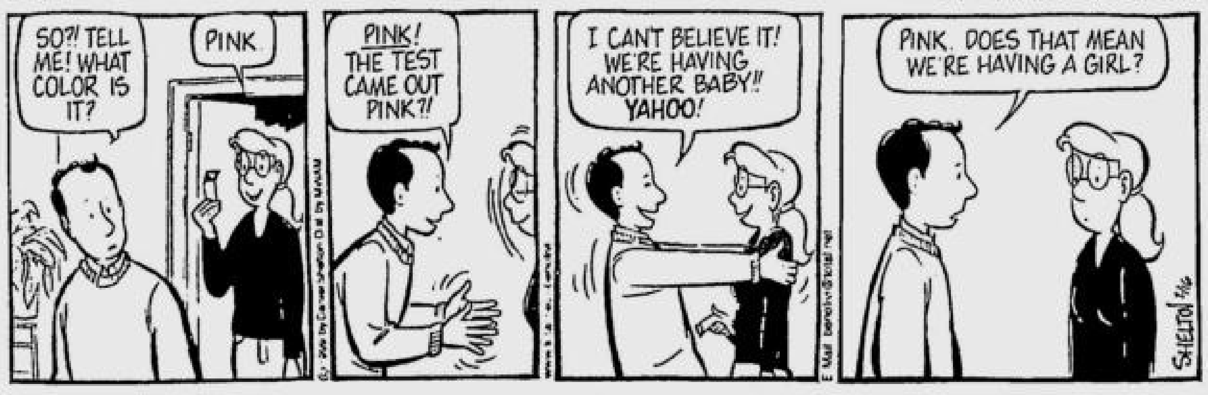
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


SA PARKS & WILDLIFE
NASAAN NA KAYA ANG MGA UNGGOY?
KANINA PA KAYO PAIKUT-IKOT. MAY PROBLEMA BA?
HO? A, E..
ANAK PO KAMI NI MIKE RODRIGO. 'YUNG KOLUMNISTA.
EVGARAYBLAS 8.5.1
ABA, FAN NIYA' KO. AT PALAGAY KO'Y SI GORIO ANG PAKAY N'YO.
SINO HONG GORIO???

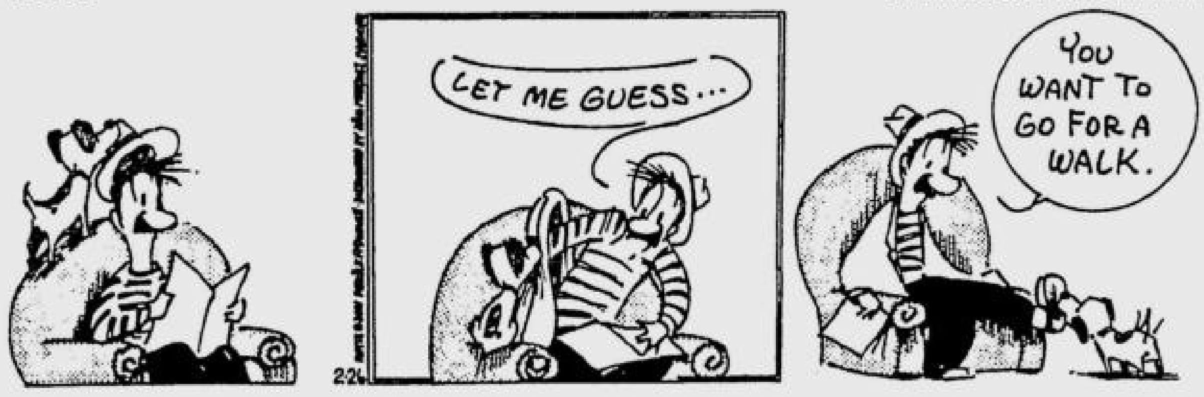
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SO?! TELL ME! WHAT COLOR IS IT?
PINK
PINK! THE TEST CAME OUT PINK?!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! WE'RE HAVING ANOTHER BABY!! YAHOO!
PINK. DOES THAT MEAN WE'RE HAVING A GIRL?
SHELTON

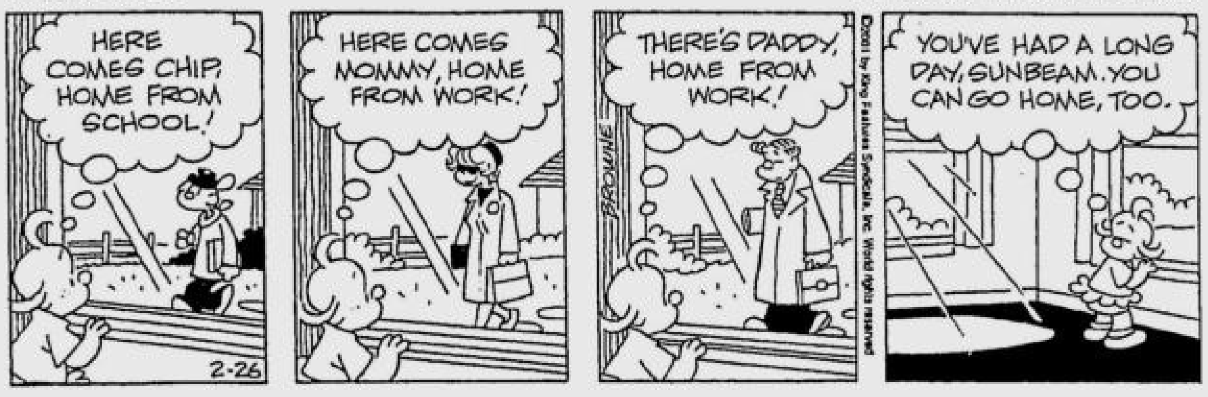
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


LET ME GUESS...
YOU WANT TO GO FOR A WALK.
2-26

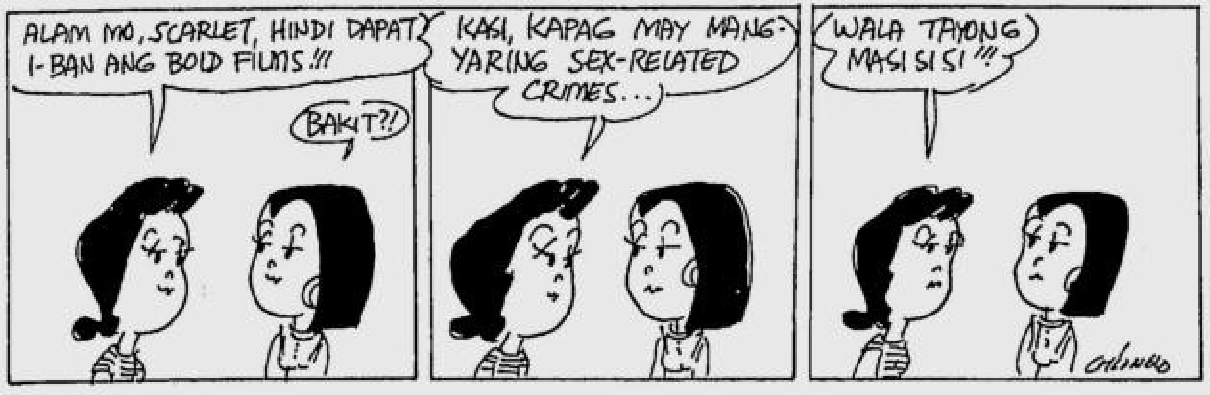
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


HERE COMES CHIP, HOME FROM SCHOOL!
2-26
HERE COMES MOMMY, HOME FROM WORK!
THERE'S DADDY, HOME FROM WORK!
BROWNE
©2001 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
YOU'VE HAD A LONG DAY, SUNBEAM. YOU CAN GO HOME, TOO.

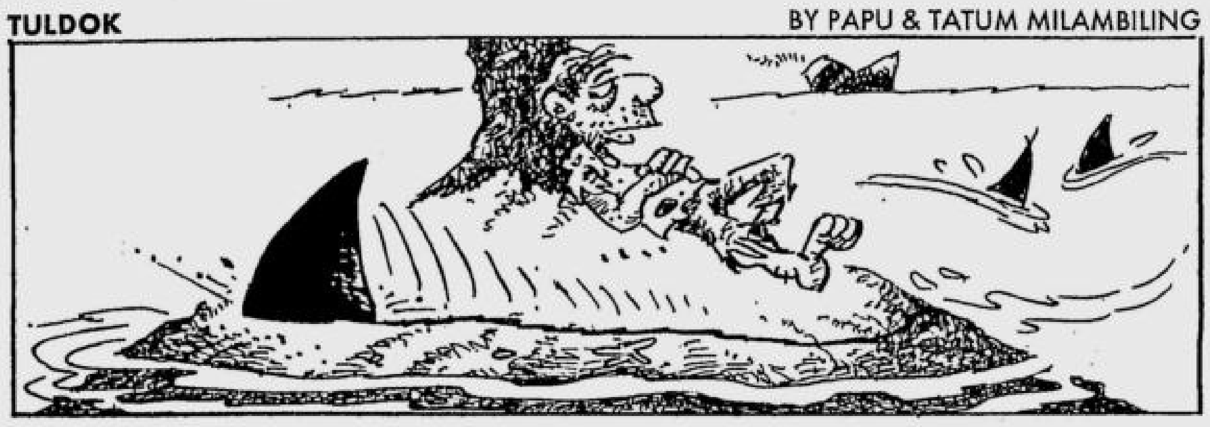
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ALAM MO, SCARLET, HINDI DAPAT I-BAN ANG BOLD FILMS!!!
BAKIT?!
KASI, KAPAG MAY MANG-YARING SEX-RELATED CRIMES...
WALA TAYONG MASISISI!!!
Chionglo

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING



PLAYSHOP kids

'Sinakulo' at Fort Santiago

SINING Intramuros, a theater group composed of residents of the historic Walled City, presents its version of the *sinakulo* or Passion play on April 8, 4 p.m., at Plaza Moriones in Fort Santiago.

The *sinakulo* is only one of the Philippine dramatic art forms brought about by the merger of indigenous culture and Catholic religious rituals introduced by the Spaniards. By the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, the *sinakulo* became a formal play with sets and costumes, performed by traveling commercial troupes in the *teatro* (theater), on the open-air *entablado* (stage) and in the *sabungan* (cockpit) in the barrios of Bulacan and Rizal.

Entrance fees are P40 for adults and P15 for children and students. Call 527-3138/2961.

PEOPLE POWER COALITION
IBOTO 13-0! Bagong Politika. Ating Pag-asa.
VOT FOR D CHAMMP!
VILLAR OSMEÑA CAÑADA FLAVIER OBET RECTO DRILON SHATO HERRERA ARROYO MONSOD MAGSAYSAY PANGILINAN
This political ad was paid for by 13-0 Movement and Consumers & Communicators for Good Governance for PPC, Metro Manila

Trumpets Playshop can make you fly

(From page E3)

Faustino, Chari Arespacochaga, among others. Basic acting for kids, teens and adults will be taught by "Little Mermaid" writer-director Jaime del Mundo, theater actress Lorna Lopez and Leni Rivera, a graduate of New York University's theater program.

Of course live entertainment wouldn't be possible without the aspects of production so Playshop offers classes in stage management or the craft of putting a show together, and technical theater, which teaches students how to design lights and sounds. What most people don't know is that there is such a demand for good stage managers, lighting and sound designers, that Playshop graduates almost always get jobs after summer.

Another very good stepping stone is the TV newscasting class of Kata Inocencio. Many ABS-CBN's news talents, like JC Gonzalez and Joyce Anne Burton, got their first lessons at Playshop.

Ace TV director Kokoy Jimenez reprises his role as Playshop's TV production guru. He promises his class to be real fun this summer where the students will get to shoot their own music videos.

Toch Arellano, one of the most sought after photographers, will be sharing tricks of his trade in this year's photography course, which will touch on field shoots, studio setups and darkroom techniques.

Now if that doesn't give you enough activities to choose from to ensure that summer is covered, I don't know where else you could possibly turn. All I know is, if you want to fly, this is the perfect "runway."

Playshop 2001 runs from April 2 to June 7, with classes in five malls—the Shangri-La Plaza, SM Megamall, Alabang Town Center, SM Southmall and Onstage Greenbelt Ayala Center, with satellite classes in SM City Cebu and Tagaytay Canyon Woods. Call Trumpets at 633-5010 63 2842 or visit any one of the five venues.

COTTON USA
Join the Quest for the
COTTON USA
MOVING spirits

We need 3 tykes and 3 teens who are passionate, all revved up, and ready to change the world!

These driven, enthusiastic young Filipinos must be really into one of the following:

• sports • visual arts • performing arts • intellectual/leadership pursuits • information technology • civic advocacies

and part of these age groups:
MOVING SPIRITS TEENS (aged 13 - 19)
and
MOVING SPIRITS TYKES (aged 5 - 12)
Join now! The hunt is on the **move**!

In cooperation with: CLOSE-UP BREEZE POWER BREEZE POWERMATIC

mechanics

PHASE 1
THE SEARCH...
1. To join the "Quest for the COTTON USA Moving Spirits," secure an entry form from "COTTON USA Moving Spirits" flyers and print ads published in major dailies and magazines. Entry forms may also be obtained at selected Beagle House, Bossini, Blues Bros., Cartoon Studio, Habitat, and Jag outlets. (Photocopied forms may also be used.)
2. Candidates must be single, Filipino citizens, male or female, aged 5 - 19, and of good moral character. They must be residents of, or have a permanent address in, GMA and Luzon.
3. Candidates must be involved in any of the following pursuits:
• SPORTS - i.e. skateboarding, bungee jumping, gymnastics, in-line or ice skating, martial arts, mountain or rock climbing, etc.
• VISUAL ART - i.e. graphic art, painting, sculpture, animation, fashion or interior design, body art, etc.
• PERFORMANCE ART - i.e. dance, music, drama, mime
• INTELLECTUAL/LEADERSHIP PURSUITS - i.e. entrepreneurs, club or org leaders, debaters, writers, etc.
• INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY - i.e. computer techies, internet buffs, PC gamers, etc.
• CIVIC ADVOCACIES - i.e. charity, ecology, religious, anti-drugs, etc. advocates
4. Fill in entry form and attach the following: a) a brief resume of the candidate describing him/herself and his/her pursuit/s from the above list; b) one (1) 3R close-up colored photograph; and c) photocopy of birth certificate.
5. Enclose in a long white envelope, and mail it to the "Quest for the COTTON USA Moving Spirits" at Strategic Edge, Inc., 501 Greenbelt Mansion, 106 Perea Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City 1200; or drop in drop boxes located at the same address.
6. There will be two categories: MOVING SPIRITS TYKES, for kids aged 5 - 12; and MOVING SPIRITS TEENS for those aged 13 - 19.
7. All entries must be in by April 15, 2001, 6 PM.
8. A panel of judges will pre-screen submitted entries and choose twelve (12) semi-finalists each for the TEENS and the TYKES category on April 16, 2001, 10 am at Strategic Edge, Inc., 501 Greenbelt Mansion, 106 Perea Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City 1200. The twenty-four (24) semi-finalists will be notified through phone and registered mail to come to the Strategic Edge, Inc., office on April 19, 2001 at 10 AM for a personal interview by the judges.
9. Criteria for judging is as follows:
• SELECTED PURSUIT & INVOLVEMENT - 40%
The uniqueness, importance and aspect of contestant's pursuit in either SPORTS, VISUAL ART, PERFORMANCE ART, INTELLECTUAL/LEADERSHIP PURSUITS, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, or a CIVIC ADVOCACY. The skill the contestant has developed in his/her chosen pursuit, and the length of time he/she has been engaged in such.
• WIT / INTELLIGENCE - 30%
How well the contestant fares in the question-and-answer portion before the panel of judges. How well he/she can express him/herself, how well he/she thinks on his/her feet. His/her knowledge of things beyond his/her selected pursuit.
• PERSONALITY & CHARM - 30%
How pleasant, humorous and likeable the contestant is. How friendly, open and interesting he/she is.
10. Prizes will be awarded after the judging.
11. The judges will choose the twelve (12) finalists, six (6) for the TEENS category and six (6) for the TYKES category. The finalists will each receive the following prizes:
TEENS (6):
• Clothes from COTTON USA licensees
• P5,000. Gift Certificate from Tower Records
• Sony Discman
• P 15,000 cash
• Unilever Gift Pack worth P2,500.
TYKES (6):
• Clothes from COTTON USA licensees
• P5,000. Gift Certificate from Toy Kingdom
• Casio M-I20 49-key Musical Organ
• P 15,000 cash
• Unilever Gift Pack worth P 2,500.
12. 20% tax for prizes in excess of P10,000, will be shouldered by Unilever Philippines.
13. Employees of Cotton Council International, COTTON USA licensees, Unilever Philippines and their advertising and PR agencies, and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from becoming candidates in the quest.
Control Measures:
1. All entries received shall be dropped in a sealed drop box in the custody of Ms. Neri Balais of Strategic Edge, Inc., 501 Greenbelt Mansion, 106 Perea Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City 1200.
2. A DTI representative will be present upon opening of the box and during the pre-screening and selection of finalists.
3. The selection committee will be composed of representatives from Breeze, Close-Up, and Cotton Council International.
4. All semi-finalists will be notified by phone and mail two (2) days before the interview schedule. Absence during the panel interview automatically disqualifies the candidate.

See posters and flyers for the rules of the hunt.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0355. Series of 2001.

That's the spirit.

Stay tuned for phase 2...
The vote for the 6 MOVING SPIRITS and the grand raffle!

If you're ready to change the world, fill this in and send it to the address below.

Yes! I'd like to join the Quest for the COTTON USA Moving Spirits.
Name: ____________
Address: ____________
Telephone Nos.: (landline) ____________
(cellphone) ____________
Birthday: ____________ Age: ______
School: ____________
e-mail address: ____________
Signature: ____________

I am very passionate about:
○ sports
○ visual arts
○ performing arts
○ intellectual/leadership pursuits
○ information technology
○ civic advocacies

Please enclose a 3R close-up colored photo of yourself, and a brief resume describing your pursuit (one or more of the six listed above), and how it makes you feel; and a photocopy of your birth certificate.

The Quest for the COTTON USA Moving Spirits
Strategic Edge, Inc., 501 Greenbelt Mansion, 106 Perea Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City 1200.

This may be photocopied

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MANILA

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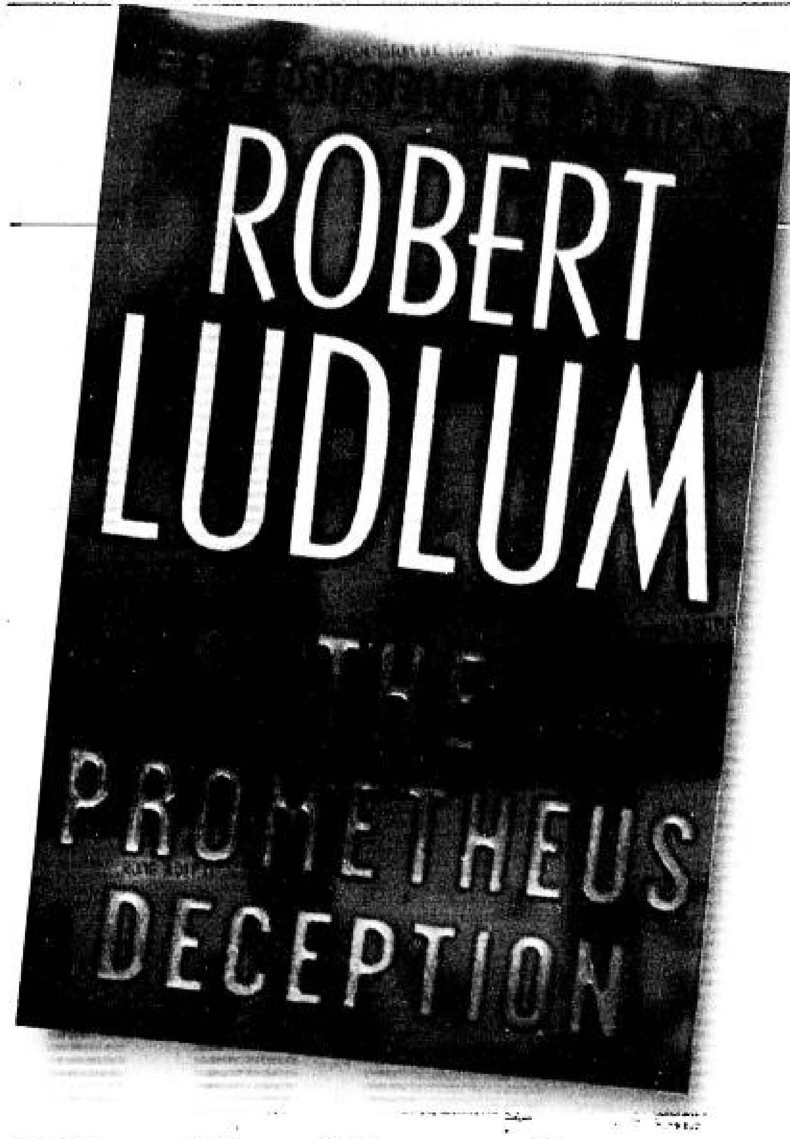
(at the back of Manila City Hall)

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.1984-A1-003, Series of 2000.

LIFESTYLE

Books



It's only fitting that best-selling author Robert Ludlum's last novel shows him doing what he does best

The Ludlum legacy

The Prometheus Deception
By Robert Ludlum
St. Martin's Press, New York, 2000, 509 pages

BY RUEL S. DE VERA

REVIEW

CONSPIRACIES never had it as good as when Robert Ludlum was making them up.

In over 20 novels through three decades, Ludlum basically laid down the groundwork for the right formula when it came to covert government operations that the public didn't need to know. From 1980's "The Bourne Identity" to 1995's "The Apocalypse Watch," Ludlum laid down shadowy plot after shadowy plot, also giving the world the kind of fascinating super spy as ex-CIA hit man Jason Bourne from the Bourne books. With Ludlum's untimely death last month, the readers won't be wanting because they can still experience Ludlum's neck-snapping hijinks with his last book, "The Prometheus Deception."

In typical Ludlum style, the best-selling author's 22nd book packs one complex international plot after another, all done up with the kind of virtuoso detail that makes heads spin. "The Prometheus Deception" hightails it from Carthage to Washington to Chantilly to Seattle via a few more plush and exotic locales as Ludlum's hero tries to unravel a dizzyingly complicated international conspiracy that isn't afraid to take innocent lives to get what it wants.

The protagonist of "The Prometheus Deception" is vintage Ludlum: Nick Bryson is a square-jawed, multilingual and lethal operative of the truly secret agency called the Directorate. For years, Bryson has used his considerable talents to impose the Directorate's will on a world that didn't know what was good for her. Or so he thought.

In the midst of a separation from his beloved wife Elena, Bryson is retired, taking on the life of a college professor until the CIA comes calling, claiming that the Directorate is actually a terrorist ring which had been feeding Nick lies all this time. After the Directorate seemingly vanishes off the face of the earth and after a contract is taken out on him, Bryson agrees to work with the CIA to break up the Directorate.

But after a few hair-raising international incidents that involve an exploded boat and many dead bodies, Nick begins to question who is behind the string of terrible terrorist acts that come one after the other. As more people die and more cover-ups are

THE LUDLUM/ p.F2

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Rustan's BABY
Make your baby the first Rustan's Baby of this millennium! He/she could win:
Baby Products Showcase worth P100,000
PLUS
A College Educational Fund worth over P500,000

If you have a baby born in the year 2000, you can register him/her as a candidate. All you have to do is visit any Rustan's Department Store Infant's Section and make an initial purchase of at least P2,000.

Then tell your relatives and friends to shop at Rustan's Children's Department to help you earn points for your millennium baby beginning **March 30, 2001.** Every P500 purchase you make is equivalent to one point. If your baby comes up with the highest number of points by **March 15, 2002,** he/she wins! And if your baby wins, you or any of your relatives and friends also get an added treat -- a chance to win a Rustan's Gift Certificate worth P50,000! So shop now and be a Rustan's winner.

Winners will be announced on March 22, 2002. See posters for details.

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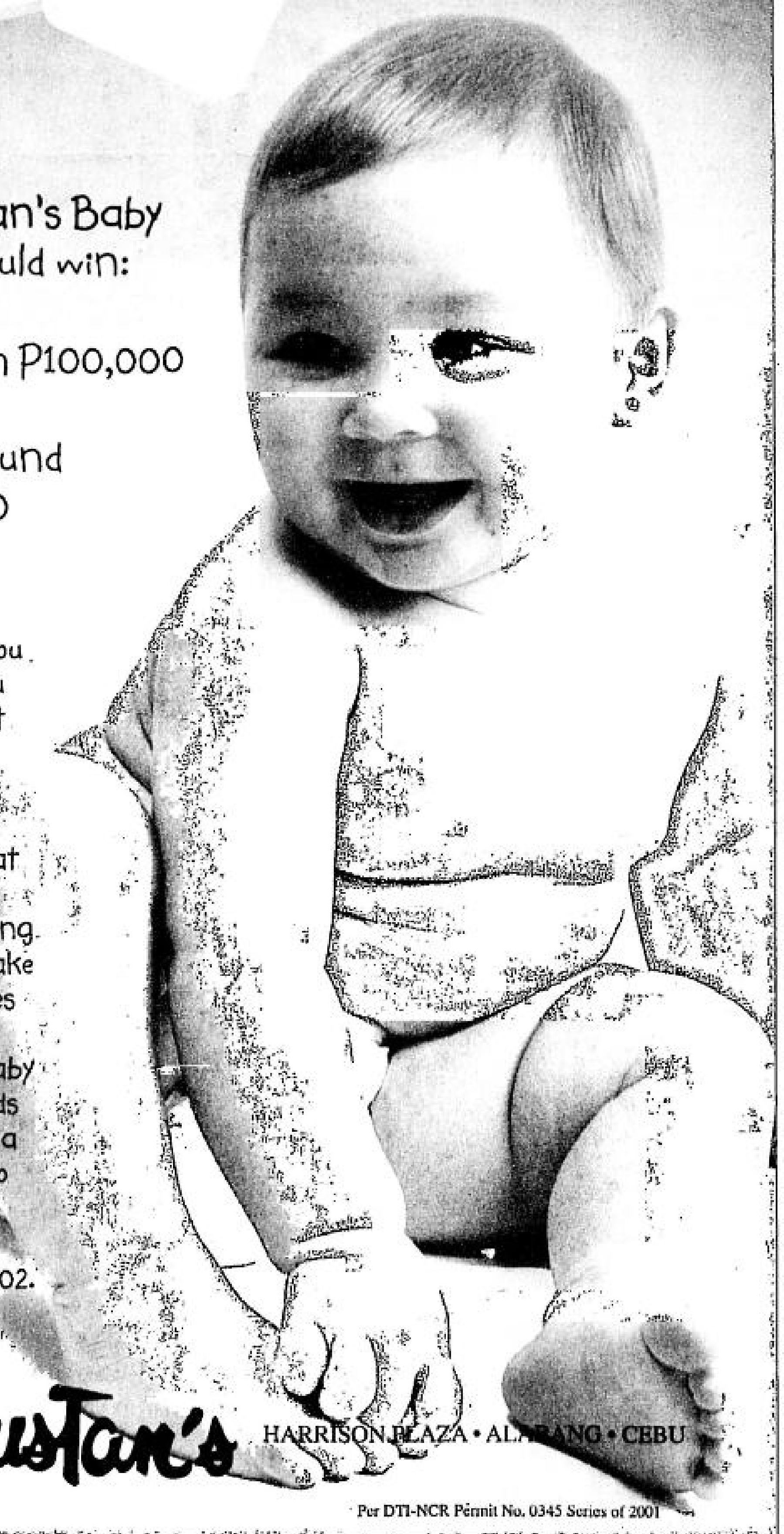
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0345 Series of 2001



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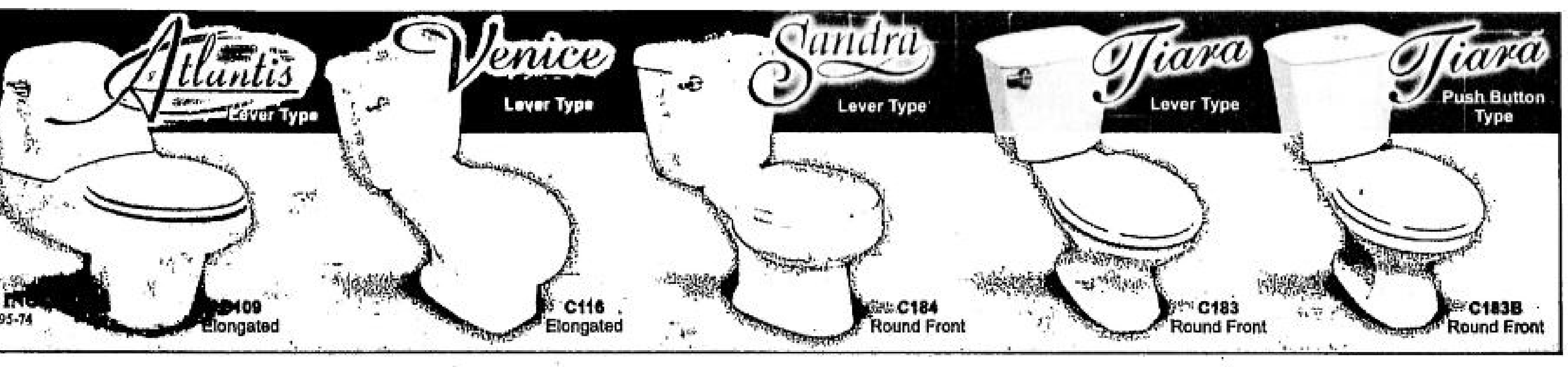


A practical way to experience belonging

Playing by Heart: The Vision and Practice of Belonging
By O. Fred Donaldson, Ph.D.
Health Communication Inc:, 1993, 244 pages

BY DULCE FESTIN-BAYBAY

REVIEW

IMAGINE a 57-year-old 6-footer of a man, with beard and moustache, rolling on a mat with special children of various ages, laughing, touching everyone, free of all inhibitions, and enjoying himself. And the children are also laughing, giggling and rolling all over this man.

Introducing Dr. Fred Donaldson, aikidoist, international education consultant recognized for his ongoing research and play with children and wild animals. He is also considered the world's foremost authority on play and author of the book "Playing by Heart" which, according to its preface, is "an invitation to come out and play with our wonderful world, to see beyond our lists and definitions and pin the mystery ourselves."

This is not a "how to play" book. Rather, it is a volume replete with quotes and insights into one of man's taken-for-granted basic sustenance, the need to touch through play.

For more than 20 years, Donaldson has pioneered the use of play as an alternative to contest behavior, abuse and aggression. The book describes his playmates as including all children, the disabled, the terminally ill, abused victims, trauma survivors, even business education and healthcare professionals.

Although his academic accomplishments describe him as one who has masteral and doctorate degrees in geography, he has turned his back on all these to connect himself with what truly matters in life—to love and trust man and animals through play.

The book describes the origin of play, which is one of harmony, and how it has come to be misunderstood as far as adults are concerned. "I've heard many adult excuses to avoid play with children: too busy, too old, too tired, too big, too dangerous. All of our reasons are based on fear," writes Donaldson. "We're afraid of losing control, looking foolish, hurting children, being sued. Like plaque that blocks the flow of blood in our veins and arteries, fear attaches to our spirits and bodies hindering the free flow of love."

Skin hunger

Donaldson's book is full of heartwarming anecdotes that show and even prove that due to adults' misconception of the true nature and enhancing qualities of playing with children and even animals, the gifts of play on one's inner self is lost. "Playing is an awesome burden of individual openness that demands a total reversal of priorities of values, discipline and thirst," explains the author in this thought-provoking book.

The Vision & Practice Of Belonging
PLAYING BY HEART
"Fred Donaldson sweeps across the heavens and the earth, indeed the whole cosmos, in awakening us to the meaning and reality of play. He informs us, in a masterful style, that play is an energy found everywhere — 'it is our common ground of Creation.' This is a necessary book of joy and hope for these times."
Matthew Fox, author of
Sheer Joy, Original Blessing and The Coming of the Cosmic Christ
O. Fred Donaldson, PH.D.

What the book demonstrates is that the value of cooperation, of interacting, should be at the level of the heart so as to open doors for parents, counselors, therapists and those with children. It shows how adults have forgotten the kind of connectedness they had in early childhood when life was intuitively seen as something "to be one, not won." The book's pages describe play as a universal and practical way to experience belonging. It inspires the freeing and seeing of creative energy, trust and love expressed through playing.

An interesting chapter is on the subject of touching and how most adults are suffering from "skin hunger."

"Most people are not aware that they don't know how to touch. As children grow older," says Donaldson, "what began as sensitive, nurturing full body touch become more restrained, and by adolescence is demeaned to ritual handshakes and perfunctory hugs, if not completely terminated."

He goes on to show how the same parents who cuddled their son or daughter at 10 months are likely to feel hesitant when the child reaches 10 years, and inhibited when the child is 14. On the other hand, the child who shared a kiss at one year thinks kisses are dumb at 10, surreptitiously wants one at 14 but won't say so, and then at 17 can hardly live without one. We know that skin hunger has not decreased with age; yet in our inability to treat it honestly, touch becomes inappropriate, abusive and destructive. After long periods away from nurturing touch, we become cold, stiff and awkward."

Donaldson shows through his experiences with sick, abused, or special children how touch can heal. It can even make the abused and hurt child smile and become whole as a person, once again.

The book shows, also through various stories, how playing with children has taught the author a lot of things. "In children's hands, I have been crafted into more than I was, more than I thought I could be, and perhaps more than I can put in words. Through their sincere, careful and loving touch, many children have made of me someone new." He has learned that to recover the characteristics of childlikeness, the basic principles must be mastered.

The six play principles he teaches are: Be not afraid of life; All life is of one kind; Touch is our primary language; Be a beginner; Smooth moves follow a clear heart; and, Expect nothing, be ready for anything.

In actual play practice, these principles can be translated, says Donaldson, into interaction as follows: Get down; Be quiet; Pay attention; Let go; Table thoughts; and, Be in touch.

The author hopes that through this book, he may share his knowledge and experiences of how to give love to everyone in order to create a better world for children and adults as well.

"Playing by Heart" is available in limited copies for P750. Call Vangie or Debbie at 927-7195.

Enchanted treat this summer

TICKETS to Enchanted Kingdom can now be conveniently purchased at its off-site ticket and retail outlets. The outlets, on a limited engagement in various commercial establishments, offer patron, value- for-money admission packages plus other summer promo perks.

The ticket and retail outlets are operational at the Marketplace in the Foodpark in Enterprises (Paseo de Roxas corner Ayala Avenue) April 16-30, and the Food Odyssey in LKG Plaza (Ayala Avenue) May 2-17.

Ticket buyers can avail of EK's 3+1 offer (purchase three tickets and get one free ticket of the same value).

Experience the newest, soon-to-open Rio Grande River Rapids Ride. Off-site ticket patrons will get the chance to win souvenir items. Performances by EK's lovable mascots as well as magical shows will also be presented.

For its summer schedule, EK is open 2-9 p.m. (Wednesday-Friday except Holy Thursday and Good Friday) and 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Saturday and Sunday). It is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. However, on April 9-10, May 1, May 14 and June 12, the park will be open 2-9 p.m. Call 830-2111 to -17.

EK'S Wizard and Princess Victoria with teller Viola welcome patrons at EK's off-site ticket booth.

'KSP' walk for Balagtas

THE LINANGAN sa Imahen, Retorika at Anyo (Lira), with the Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas (Umpil), held a mini-walk and program as fitting tribute this year to Balagtas, whose 213th birth anniversary was celebrated yesterday.

The mini-walk yesterday assembled at 9 a.m. under the Nagtahan bridge on JP Laurel, and proceeded to the Pandacan Plaza where stands the bust of the Prince of Tagalog Poets, famous for his masterpieces "Florante at Laura" and "Orosman at Zafira."

A short program featuring prizewinning poets Teo T. Antonio, Vim Nadera, Roberto T. Anonuevo and Michael Coroza highlighted the event.

Participants to the walk were called on to give new definitions to the letters "KSP," a jest that ordinarily means "Kulang sa Pansin" (lacking in attention). Poets lamented the narrow readership, and the lack of interest in and support for the literary endeavors of the nation's writers.

The slogans written in placards, promoted new definitions of KSP to honor Balagtas and national literature.

E-mail rta9@yahoo.com or call Grace Bengco at 527-5529.

The Ludlum legacy

(From page F1)

unraveled, Nick realizes that there is an even more secretive group operating behind the curtain, a group known only as Prometheus. The requisite and unexpected betrayals, twists and gun battles ensue, but soon enough Bryson meets up with his surprising but not unprepared antagonist at which point "The Prometheus Deception" really begins to lock and load.

Veteran Ludlum readers will note that while conspiracies are nothing new, the Prometheus group's reach and methods have evolved from the ones they've seen before. The mind behind Prometheus, for one, is very 2001—no easy Cold War relics with a chip on their shoulders to kick around here. And protagonist Bryson, though seemingly possessed of the usual amount of unbelievable fortitude and fortune as super spies often do, is actually a well-fleshed out, if overly talented, character with a back story, relatives and emotional baggage.

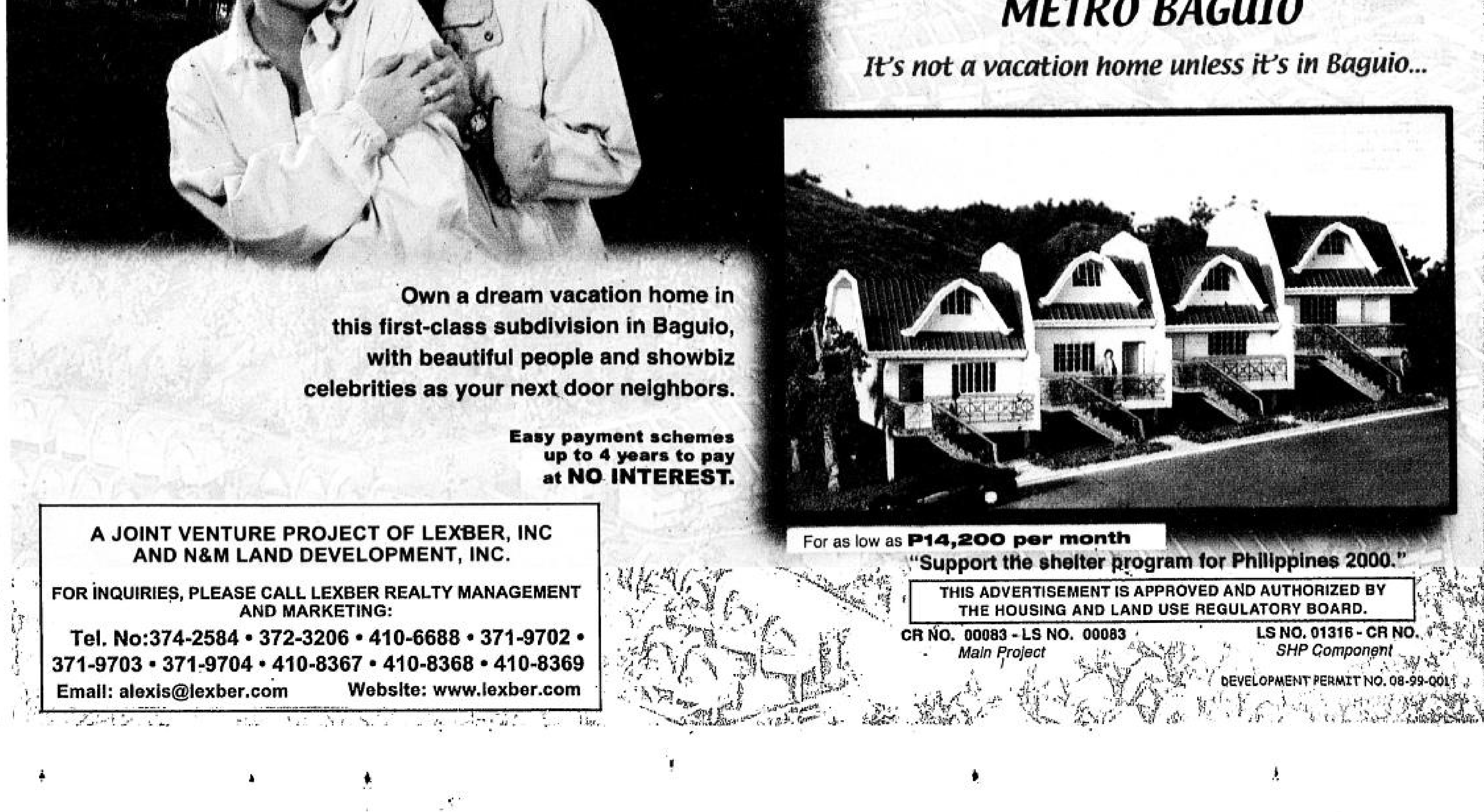
The lushly depicted international settings, the improbable odds, and even the sudden twists may all seem a bit incongruous at first; but Ludlum's gift has always been his ability to make it all work.

And work it does in "The Prometheus Deception." Ludlum keeps everything simmering throughout the first few chapters, throwing a few red herrings here and there, before letting all the seemingly unconnected pieces together and picking up murderous momentum toward the end. The hard-nosed revelations will keep even jaded readers on their toes as Ludlum wraps his conspiracy's unraveling in a sleek, accessible sheath through his smart if voluminous narrative.

This is no gritty, battle-in-the-trenches counter-intelligence adventure. "The Prometheus Deception" is about adventurous agents in tuxedos, convincing accents and fine wine served on yachts. It's about thoroughly engaging, guilt-free and satisfying testosterone-charged entertainment about beautiful and talented men and women with guns. And it all works.

"The Prometheus Deception" is a fine example to cap Ludlum's 30 years of thrilling conspiracies and international action, a book of fiery action and intricate black ops plots, a fitting flourish at the finish that personifies the compelling legacy that the mastermind who was Robert Ludlum has left behind.

Available in hardcover at National Bookstore and Power-Books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Cirilo Bautista's monumental 'Trilogy of St. Lazarus' to be launched

CENTENNIAL Literary Prize winner and Palanca Hall of Famer Cirilo F. Bautista will launch his latest book, "The Trilogy of Saint Lazarus," on April 6, 5:30 p.m., at the PowerBooks on Arnaiz Street, Makati City. This book is published by the De La Salle University Press.

A project that took 30 years to finish, "The Trilogy" is a unique achievement in Philippine literature. It is a masterful rendition in poetry of the development of the Filipino soul, from its colonial bondage to an envisioned liberation. Bautista's exhibits here a heroic skill in managing the language and devices of the epic form which he has, in a manner of speaking, reshaped in order to harmonize with certain aesthetic requirements.

For the first time, the three books comprising "The Trilogy" are brought together in one volume. They are independent of each other though necessarily linked by the historical idea. All move to the same direction—a synthesis of nationhood that is still fractured but already in place. The first book, "The Archipelago" (first published in 1970), won first prize in the Palanca Literary contest; the second book, "Telex Moon" (first published in 1981), won first prize in the same contest and was also given the National Book Award; and the third book, "Sunlight on Broken Stones" (published in 1999 and 2000), won first prize in the Centennial Literary Contest sponsored by the Philippine Government, the National Book Award and the Gintong Aklat Award of the Book Development of the Philippines.

The story in "The Trilogy" is woven by the discourses of various persons who have played significant parts in the drama of Filipino consciousness. The events and circumstances that connect them are delineated not in a chronological sequence but in a psychological sequence, the focus being the passionate retrieval of national memories.

"The Trilogy" is undoubtedly Bautista's literary masterpiece. It possesses rare depth, range and power. It shows how, in the hands of a capable craftsman, the epic mode can be exciting and contemporary in appeal. With this book, Bautista's contribution to Philippine literature has become tremendous and significant.

CIRILO Bautista

Bautista teaches poetry and creative writing at De La Salle University-Manila, where he is a full professor and holder of the Angel and Celerina Reyes Distinguished Professorial Chain in the Humanities. He is also senior associate at the UST Center for Creative Writing and Studies. His books on poetry, fiction and essays have won many literary awards. He taught at Waseda University in Japan and Ohio University in the United States. He was also a visiting writer in Cambridge University, England. Bautista holds an honorary fellowship in creative writing from the State University of Iowa, United States and a doctorate in language and literature from La Salle.

Bautista is well-acclaimed by critics here and abroad. American writer and critic George Starbuck said Bautista is "a better epic poet than any American I know." According to National Artist Jose Garcia Villa, Bautista "writes like a master: With genius in language and genius of imagination."

Palanca Awards broadens scope

THE ORGANIZERS of the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature take the country's most prestigious literary contest to a broader level. Beginning this year, former Filipino citizens or Filipinos who have changed their citizenship can now join in any of the contest categories. The Carlos Palanca Foundation believes this new annex to the rules will provide more Filipinos abroad a venue to express themselves and a chance to be a part of literary history.

Entries for poetry, short story, one-act play, full-length play, informal essay, short story for children, teleplay, screenplay and future fiction categories are being accepted. The Kabataan Informal Essay, one of the latest categories to be included in the literary contest, is open exclusively to high school students.

Deadline for submission of entries is midnight of April 30. Entries sent by mail or courier should be postmarked not later than April 15. Entries can also be sent via e-mail through cpawards@info.com.ph.

The Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature was established in honor of Don Carlos Palanca Sr., a self-educated businessman and patron of educational institutions. Having celebrated its golden anniversary recently, the awards continue to stand as a respected institution in Philippine Literature.

Entry forms and contest rules are now available at the Carlos Palanca Foundation Inc., G/F CPJ Building, 105 C. Palanca St., Legaspi Village, Makati City 1229. Call 818-36-81 to 85 locals 31 and 24 or e-mail cpawards@info.com.ph.

Kabataan essay entries welcomed

THE DON Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature, the country's most prestigious literary contest, is inviting high school students to submit entries in the Kabataan Essay category by writing about what they think is the greatest book they have read.

The Kabataan Informal Essay is open to all high school students aged 18 and below. This year's theme is "The Greatest Book I've Read" for the English division and "Ang Pinakamahusay na Aklat na Aking Nabasa" for the Filipino division.

Entries to the Kabataan Essay must be accompanied by an attestation form the high school principal that the student is a bona fide student of the school at the time of the contest deadline and that the entry is the author's original work. Each entry should be four to five pages long and must carry an original title.

Deadline for entries is until midnight of April 30. Entries sent by mail or courier should be postmarked not later than April 15. Entries can also be sent via e-mail through cpawards@info.com.ph.

The Kabtaan Informal Essay is one of the latest categories to be included in the literary contest. This category aims to encourage young people to write. Entries for the other categories namely, poetry, short story, one-act play, full-lenght play, informal essay, short story for children, teleplay, screenplay and future fiction are also being accepted.

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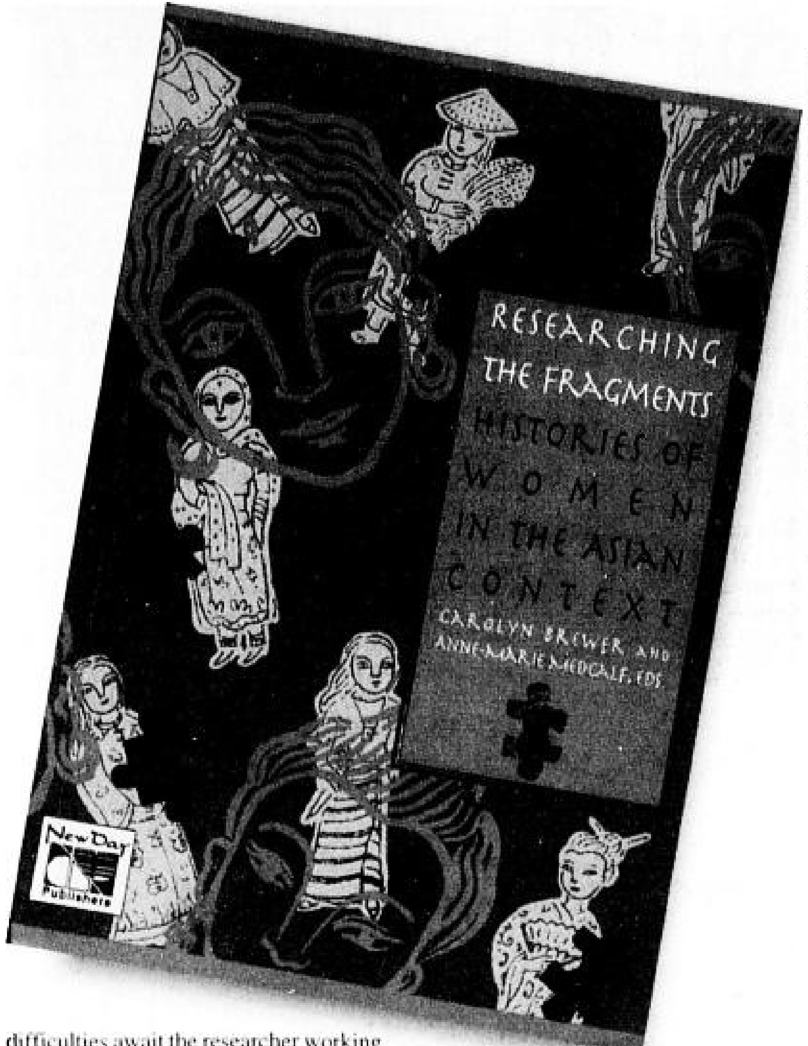
The Asian woman in fragments

Researching the Fragments: Histories of Women in the Asian Context
Edited by Carolyn Brewer and Anne-Marie Medcalf
New Day Publishers, QC, 2000

BY DR. SANDRA WILSON

REVIEW


RESEARCHING THE FRAGMENTS
HISTORIES OF WOMEN IN THE ASIAN CONTEXT
CAROLYN BREWER AND ANNE-MARIE MEDCALF, EDS
New Day Publishers

"RESEARCHING the Fragments" ranges across a broad spectrum of countries, disciplinary approaches and historical periods, from the history of Chinese Australians in the 19th and 20th centuries and Vietnamese Australians in the present, to French women in colonial Vietnam, religious leaders in the Philippines in the 1500s, Japanese and Chinese prostitutes in Singapore, Malaysia and Australia, matriarchal communities on the Sino-Tibetan border, women writing verse for each other in secret scripts in late Imperial China, contemporary political leaders in the Philippines, female heroes of classical Malay literature and more. The editors are to be congratulated for producing such a coherent and interesting book out of such a wide range of material.

Specialists in many different areas will find things to follow up in this volume; the diversity of topics is perhaps at first overwhelming. On the other hand, however, the papers do have themes in common, and can be read for what they jointly offer to the study of history, culture and politics, too.

First, the great theme that all the papers have in common is reflected in the book's title. It is generally acknowledged that standard histories and studies of culture have almost always left the women out, and that part of the reason for such an omission is that women do not often appear prominently or clearly in the sources that are most often used. Moreover, the historical questions that have interested scholars have often been questions that focus on areas of male activity, like high politics, battles, diplomacy and so on. To understand more about women in history, we have to be prepared to be creative and to look in new areas, or perhaps at old sources in new ways and with new questions. Sometimes, it's necessary to "research the fragments." As the book's editors say: "The title is drawn from the perception that writing the histories of women in Asia involves negotiating a multifaceted fragmentation process at the level of culture, theory, resources and therefore methodology."

All the papers in this volume share a very strong consciousness of methodology, and of the problems faced by researchers who want to know what women were doing and what they thought about it. Some of them are also interested in the ways in which women have constructed their own narratives about their lives and passed them on to each other or to new generations. Many of the contributions are based on unusual types of sources and approaches.

Photo album

So, Lan Tran's piece focuses on the central place of the family photo album in the narrative of arrival, settlement and success for a Vietnamese family in Australia. She shows us an ordinary picture of a family sitting under a tree in Hinges Park, describing what it reveals and what it hides about the family's experience of settlement. It might make you think again about family snaps.

Norma King Koi recounts in some detail the problems she had when trying to interview her relatives in the Queensland Chinese community in order to write a family history. Oral history is fairly well established these days, but special difficulties await the researcher working in Chinese communities, judging from Norma's experience—she finds out the hard way, for example, that she's not supposed to ask questions directly to her elders, which is a definite disadvantage for a family historian.

Jim Warren argues that in investigating an oppressed group like prostitutes, it is necessary to combine the life stories of individuals with an approach emphasizing collective biographies in order to develop a broad understanding of the social and cultural context of their lives.

Literature as source

Several of the contributors use literature as a source, with Christine Mathieu analyzing the creation myth of the Mosuo people on the Sino-Tibetan border to try to decide whether their society was really a matriarchal one, and what that might mean. Karen Witcombe deals with a narrative poem in classical Malay literature that sets out a very complex pattern of power relationships between men and women.

These are fascinating ways in themselves of doing research and constructing knowledge. Ultimately, though, it is important to assess what such approaches add to the understandings gained from other kinds of history. In fact the contributions to this book expand our view of Asian societies and of history generally in all kinds of ways. One of the most obvious conclusions is that the history of women in Asia is a lot more than the history of oppression, and a lot more interesting too. So, Jim Warren points out forcefully that considering the lives and experiences of the Chinese and Japanese prostitutes will provide a much better and richer picture of life in colonial Singapore.

Also dealing with Japanese prostitutes, Sachiko Sone demonstrates that organized rings of prostitution that sent women from poor farming families in Japan throughout Asia and even to Australia were one part of the colonial presence, especially in the economic sense.

Carolyn Brewer's interpretation of the clash between rival religious systems when the Spaniards came to Cebu in the 1520s, and her picture of the effect that had on gender hierarchies, suggests new dimensions of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines.

Unorthodox

Anne McLaren's account of the material written in *nushu* script, a script used and understood by women only, shows that Chinese culture in the late imperial period included much more than orthodox Confucian ideas. If nothing else, the long verse about the young woman who masquerades as a boy, and the variety of excuses she invents to avoid taking off her clothes in front of her male companion when they sleep in the same bed at night, should be enough to convince any reader of this.

Diana Giese shows that writing the oral history of Chinese Australians can suggest a quite different view of Australian society in the 19th and 20th centuries, while Heather Barker demonstrates how the biography of an individual woman, in her case Eleanor Hinder, an Australian, can help to illuminate the complexities of life in inter-war Shanghai.

Mina Roces' piece invites a reexamination of election campaigns in the Philippines. She argues that women politicians have to construct themselves very carefully in terms of the type of power they claim and the ways in which they claim it, and that media image is of crucial importance in this context.

And Anne-Marie Medcalf's examination of the lives of French women in colonial Vietnam from the 1860s to the 1940s suggests some of the fascinating ambiguities in colonialism as well as in gender politics. While the original French women settlers tried hard to construct little bits of France in the alien landscape of Vietnam, always battling spiders, snakes, heat and disease as they did so, their daughters, born in Vietnam, tended to think of conditions in Vietnam as normal. A focus on how women both fitted and didn't fit into the colonial structure in Vietnam ultimately suggests a different view of colonialism itself: in relation to male colonizers, women's status was inferior, whereas in relation to the colonized nation, they belonged to the conquering side.

"Researching the Fragments," in summary, has much to offer readers who want to reflect on how history is conceptualized, researched and written, as well as to readers who seek to know more about women in Asia and Asian women in Australia. It deserves to be widely read.

LANOT (left) autographs books as PDI columnist Amando Doronila looks on.

Marra Lanot holds double-launching of new book

"WITCH'S Dance at Iba pang Tula sa Filipino at Español" by Marra Pl. Lanot, poet-essayist, had a twin launching in the women's month of March. Published by Anvil, the book has cover and inside illustrations by well-known painter Bencab.

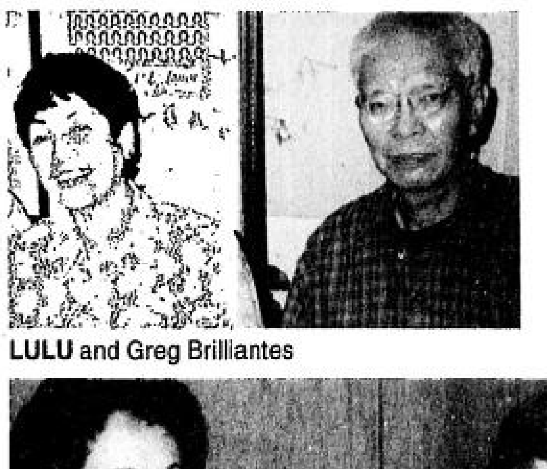
The first launching was sponsored by the Instituto Cervantes. Rose Torres Yu, dean of College of Arts and Letters, UP Diliman, and Instituto Cervantes cultural director Francisco de Blas, gave a few remarks. Spanish poet Felix Blanco, director of the Instituto Cervantes, read a Spanish poem from Lanot's book.

The second launch was held at the Ateneo Library of Women's Writings in QC, sponsored by Anvil Publishing with Aliww. Aliww director Edna Manlapaz welcomed the group, while Karina Bolasco gave the closing remarks. Readers included fictionist Indira Cajipe Endaya, poet-fictionist Joi Barrios, actor-director Malou de Guzman and singer Coritha. Coritha also rendered a song.

Among those present at the launchings were Eugenia Duran Apostol, Karla Delgado, Maribel Ongpin, Libay Linsangan Cantor, Benilda Santos, Wendell Capili, Princess Nemenzo, Fe Mangahas, Butch Dalisay, Rosario Lucero, Anna Leah Sarabia, Apo Chua, J. Neil Garcia, Maria L.M. Fres-Felix, Carlomar Doanan, Jose F. Lacaba, Rochit Tañedo, Lilia Santiago-Quindoza, Rol Peña, Terra Daffon, Cynthia Estrada, Jenny Llaguno, Erwin Bautista, Susan Fernandez, Shayne Lumbera, Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo, Hermie Beltran, Mila D. Aguilar, Maita Gomez, Kris Lanot Lacaba, Lourdes and Gregorio Brillantes, Lorna Kalaw Tirol, Ben Cabrera, Margarita Holmes and Amando Doronila.

JOI Barrios

MALOU de Guzman



LULU and Greg Brilliantes

CORITHA

EGGIE Apostol and Maribel Ongpin

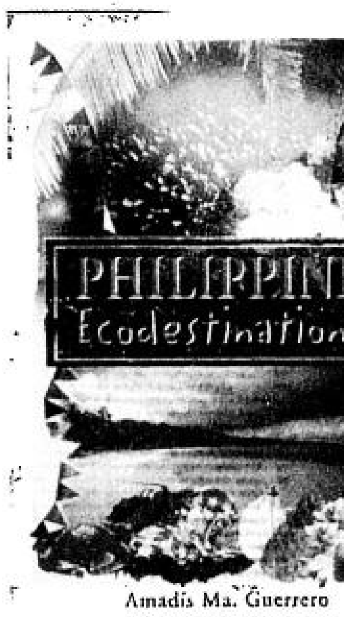
FELIX Blanco

Amadís Ma. Guerrero's eco-peregrinations

Philippine Ecodestinations
By Amadís Ma. Guerrero
Anvil Publishing Inc., Pasig City
2000, 146 pages

BY ELIZABETH LOLARGA

REVIEW



Amadís Ma. Guerrero

HOW many Filipinos can boast of the author's feat of having been to 71 out of the country's 78 provinces and living to write about it? As of late January, he still has to visit Batanes, Catanduanes, Southern Leyte, Sulu, Tawi-tawi, Maguindanao and Agusan del Sur. But he is a patient man, and the fresh millennium is on his side.

In his fourth and latest collection of travel essays, Guerrero shows how his God-given five senses and a sixth one, a sense of history, are applied in describing 33 destinations. Not surprisingly for this adventurer, Metro Manila merited a measly two write-ups.

He pays keen-eyed attention to the topography and architecture of a place, from the natural "mist-laden mountains, valleys, caves, green amphitheater-like terraces and swirling waters" of Kalinga to the "faded, ceiling-high Byzantine *retablo*, with its pantheon of saints and floral motif, musty with faded glory" of St. Joseph's Cathedral in Romblon.

Sometimes he even plays sociologist, noting during a pilgrimage to Pangasinan that "many of the elite families, *principalia*, who have lived in Lingayen, have since forsaken the town for the more progressive pastures of Manila and the United States." In Olongapo, he observes that "the scantily clad women outside bars beckoning to male passersby and potential customers" have disappeared, and in their place is a "more sanitized, more wholesome" city.

The author also reveals the gourmand in him, his happy-hour-loving side when he partakes of a hotel's Paulaner beer which is "brewed and fermented right there in the restaurant's giant tanks and the beer—light, with no hangover—really tastes fresh. He revels in the tastiness of "a vegetarian eggplant flambé, or sautéed eggplant flamed with brandy and deglazed with soy paste dressing."

The imagination at play cannot also be discounted when one is on unfamiliar terrain. Guerrero lets his loose when he imagines hearing "the native drums welcoming me to the land of the proud Kalinga tribes."

Slave

Wherever he goes, he does justice to what peripatetic English writer Robert Byron describes as the exercise of the travel impulse wherein "the traveler is a slave to his senses; his grasp of a fact can only be complete when reinforced by sensory evidence; he can know the world, in fact, only when he sees, hears and smells it."

Apart from seeking out the Provincial or Community Environment and Natural Resources Officers, Guerrero makes the valuable acquaintance of local historians, health officers, longtime residents and the exceptional politicians like Boljo-on Mayor Renato E. Amper, known to the literati as Rene Estrella Amper for his award-winning poetry, novels and essays. Amper is compared to Anton Chekhov for integrating "into his life three different disciplines: literature, medicine and politics."

While the author may have given up the writing of fiction remarkable for its strain of social realism, in this his nonfiction he has not lost his affinity for the working man. Along San Juan beach in La Union, he appreciates the backbreaking efforts of fisherfolk and their children as they haul in their catch of small fish and squid which turns out to be "just enough to feed the families, there was nothing extra to sell to visitors." The net they use is not even their own but borrowed from a kindhearted matron.

Generic nationalism

The nationalist in Guerrero, a genetic thing in his clan, we hasten to add, cannot help but take a cautionary stance in assessing the impact of the Visiting Forces Agreement on General Santos City and the "almost pristine and unspoiled" province of Sarangani. He echoes the Catholic bishops' warning that the VFA portends "an increase in prostitution, drug use, AIDS cases and the other dark components of tourism."

Our favorite among the short essays, most of which saw print on the Travel section of this paper, is "To Tacloban by Taxi." He takes "the longest taxicab ride in my fairly long life" (the author is 58 years old when he does this)—from Western Bicutan where he resides to Tacloban City—in pursuit of 38 charcoal drawings by the late Amadeo Manalad.

Here he encounters various cuisine, from the Bicolano to the Visayan, and irritations such as conflicting road signs and being almost crushed by vehicles and passengers clambering on board a roll-off-roll-on vessel. When he finally reaches the Sto. Niño Shrine and Heritage Museum, where the drawings are housed under "less than ideal conditions," he reserves some of his uncustomary sarcasm for "the legendary extravagance of the Imeldific One."

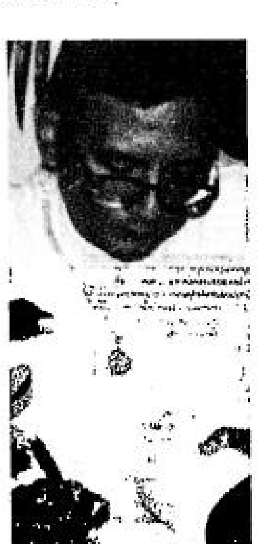
The book is supplemented by black and white photographs, mostly taken by the documentation-conscious author with his handy *silip-kalabit* camera, and a color album of Philippine snapshots.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Guerrero confesses that "many years ago, I wanted to go abroad. Blame it on colonial mentality. But then there was no opportunity and I didn't have the money so I lost interest. The events from the First Quarter Storm to the ousting of the Marcos dictatorship politicized me, and I became archipelago-conscious. I began to write about the beautiful and interesting spots outside Metro Manila and to bring them to the attention of readers. My articles are a modest effort toward national solidarity. I have never traveled abroad, and I don't regret it."

Picturesque

He likes to focus his attention on "the picturesque, the relatively undiscovered areas of the country." To get to these places, he takes long bus rides or a leisurely cruise aboard the Superferry of which he is an adopted son. In certain provinces he is hosted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and its regional offices. Most often travel is "a labor of love," and he spends for his food and accommodation on a, believe it or not, frugal budget of P2,000 for a two- or three-day trip.

Towns and provincial cities interest him because, he says, "I am Manila-born. *Wala akong probinsiya* (I have no province)." He returns to the provinces he had visited before knowing that "there are still a lot of localities to be seen. I've been to Isabela several times, but I haven't been to historic Palanan."



AMADÍS Ma. Guerrero

The places he holds dear are: Palawan "because there's so much to see, especially in the northern part"; Surigao del Norte and Surigao del Sur "because they have so many islands, islets, clean rivers, cliffs with wild vegetation"; and Bohol "because of its splendid churches, beaches, falls and fauna."

But he is not blind to the faults of under- and over-development. He can tell if a province is poor from the conditions of the houses of the people and the roughness of the roads. Along the way he has seen that "many of our mountains are depleted."

Guerrero mourns the fact that he cannot stay long in a place. "I have a full-time job at Raya Media Services. If I did not have to earn a living, I'd stay one to two weeks." Imagine how that immersion, that length of stay can further enrich his prose.

Last we looked at his office table, he was out, on a first-time exploratory sojourn to Marinduque. Surely Guerrero must feel a kind of kinship with fellow adventurer-writer Robert Louis Stevenson who wrote, "For my part, I travel not to go anywhere, but to go."

Available at National Bookstore

A prayer for Fr. Joseph Kentenich's beatification

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

I'LL always be thankful to concert pianist Leonor Kilayko for introducing me to the devotion to Fr. Joseph Kentenich whose cause for beatification is now under study by the Vatican. Every time I encounter adversities, I always turn to Father Kentenich and ask for his help.

Although he has not yet been beatified, the efficacy of his intercession has spread all over Germany and parts of the world where there are shrines dedicated to Our Lady Queen of Schoenstatt.

Even at 9 years old, the good priest already concentrated himself to the Blessed Mother who took him under her protection. Born on Nov. 18, 1885 at Gymnich near Cologne, Joseph was ordained priest on July 10, 1910. As spiritual director of the Minor Seminary in Schoenstatt near Vallendar, Father Kentenich already inspired young people there to be devoted to Mary.

Schoenstatt shrine put up

Finally, on Oct. 18, 1914, Father Kentenich transformed the small chapel of St. Michael in Schoenstatt into a Marian place. But in 1912, the good priest already wrote a pre-founding document, which expressed his total dedication to Mary.

It says: "I now place myself completely at your disposal with all that I am and have, my knowledge and ignorance, my ability and inability, and above all my heart."

It was his devotion to Mary that kept Father Kentenich steadfast in his faith, even if he was subjected to inhuman treatment in Nazi concentration camps. He never lost his dignity. Even when his work of propagating the devotion to Mary was taken away from him by church authorities and exiled him to the United States from 1951 to 1965, he kept the faith. He lived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin during those long years, constantly telling people in churches where he worked to trust in Mary, the Mother of God.

Coming back home to die

Father Kentenich was brought back to Germany sometime in 1965 where he witnessed the canonical erection of the Institute of the Schoenstatt Fathers on July 18, 1965. He led German pilgrims to a special audience with Pope Paul VI on Dec. 22, 1965. He went back home to Schoenstatt on Dec. 24, 1965 to resume his work.

He died on Sept. 15, 1968, a date that draws pilgrims from all over the world to his tomb at the sacristy of the Church of the Blessed Trinity, which stands on Mount Schoenstatt, near Vallendar.

Whenever Leonor Kilayko is in Germany, she always tries to visit the tomb of Father Kentenich. Leonor lived in Cologne for 17 years and during those years, she says that Father Kentenich always helped her.

I am having prayers for the beatification of Father Kentenich printed. One can also ask for his intercession. Those who are interested can write me. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. Those who want prayers to Mother Thrice Admirable Queen of Schoenstatt can write Linda Albano, Rizal Street, Laoag City. Those in Cebu can look for the Sisters of Schoenstatt. Perhaps you can become members of the prayer group. Those who experience his help can write to: Secretariat Fr. Joseph Ketaniel, Berg Schoenstatt 7/56179 Vallendar, Germany.

Kilayko concert in Carmelite monastery

THE MOTHER Butler Mission Guild in Silay City and the Carmelite Sisters in Bacolod will present international concert pianist Leonor Kilayko at the Carmelite Monastery on April 16 at 6 p.m. to raise funds for the projects of Mother Butler in Silay. Leonor will play pieces from Scarlatti, Bach, Schumann and Chopin.

Organizing the event are Cecile Javelona, president; Lily Alano, secretary and Nancy Javelona, treasurer, and Ruska Gamboa, vice president.

Lenten recollections

FR. Louie Niez, AM, will lead the INQUIRER employees in a recollection on April 2, 4 and 6 at the PDI building on Pasong Tamo Street. The theme is "A Journey to One's Life (A Response to God's Call)."

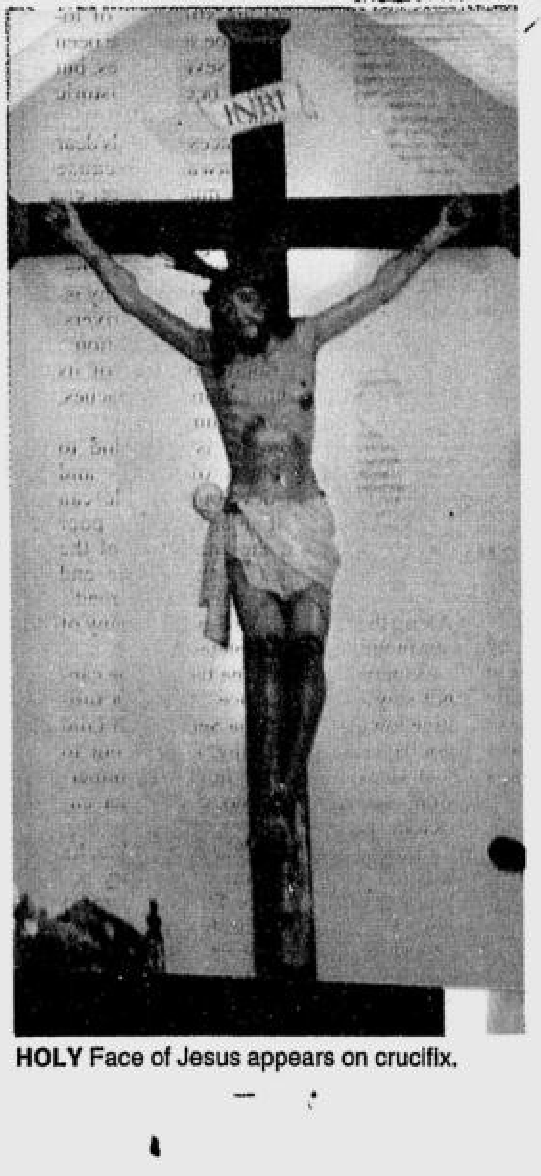
The Saints Peter and Paul Parish in Makati will hold a recollection for the youth (aged 15-25) on April 9 at Barangay Olympia complex on Fortress Street, 12 nn-5 p.m. Those interested can call Mabel at 895-8588. Registration is at 12 nn.

Good Friday procession

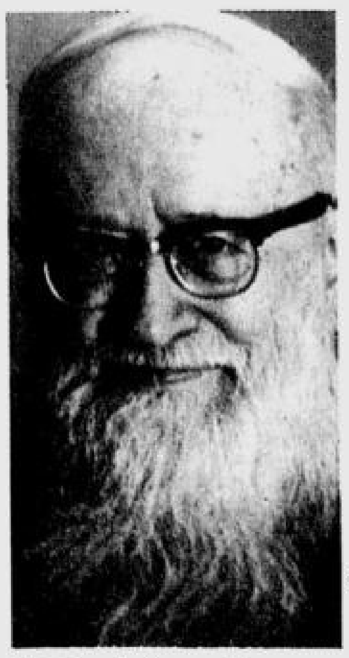
THE OLD *poblacion* of Makati will see at least 60 *carrozas* joining the Good Friday procession on April 12 at 6 p.m.

In San Pablo, Laguna the much-awaited procession of the Samahan ng Mahal na Pasyon will take place on Good Friday at 5 p.m. Clarito Ticzon has an image of Pontius Pilate washing his hands done by Francisco Vecin for the pro-

A PRAYER/ p.F6

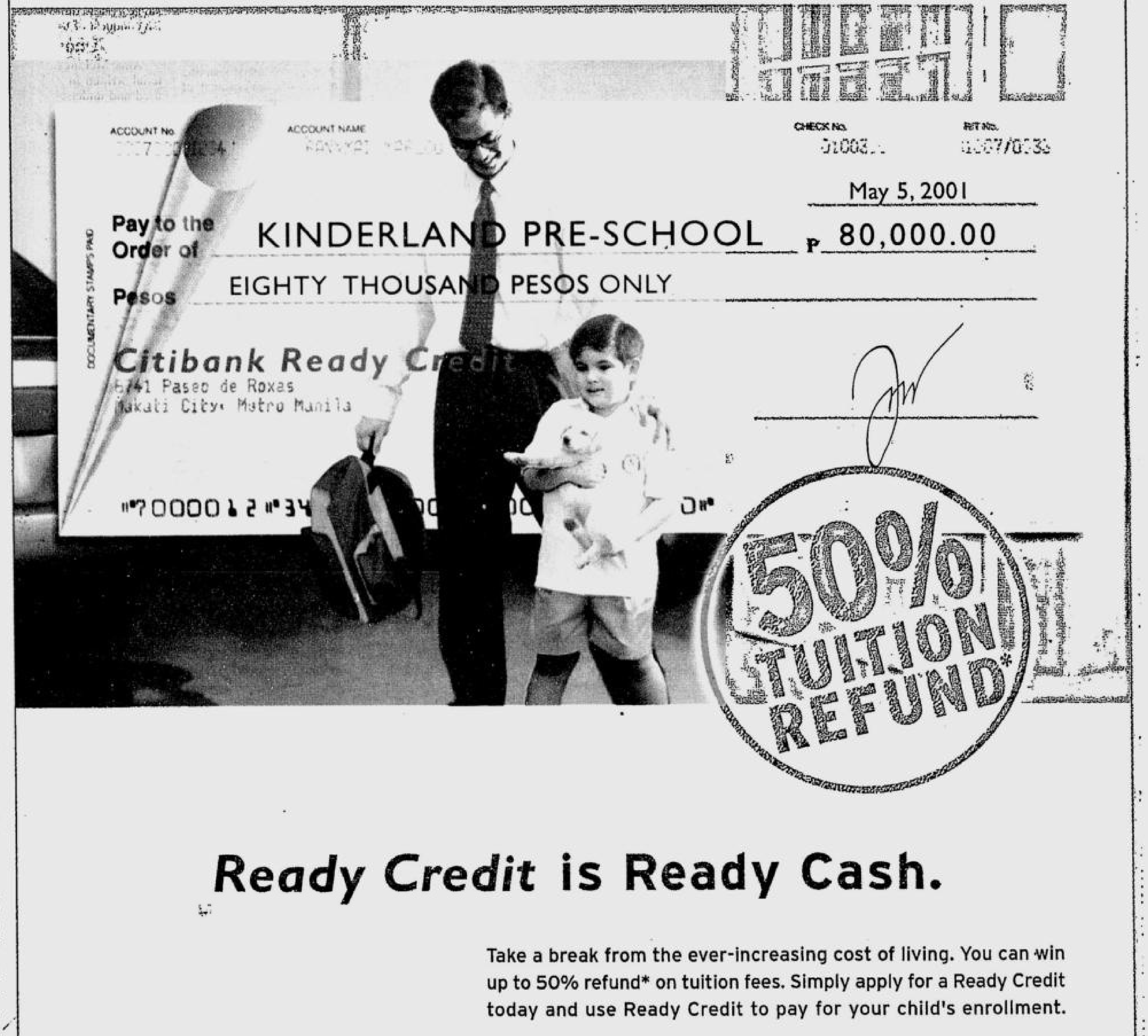


HOLY Face of Jesus appears on crucifix.



FR. Joseph Kentenich

LEONOR Kilayko (left) with Lily Alano, Cecile and Nancy Javelona



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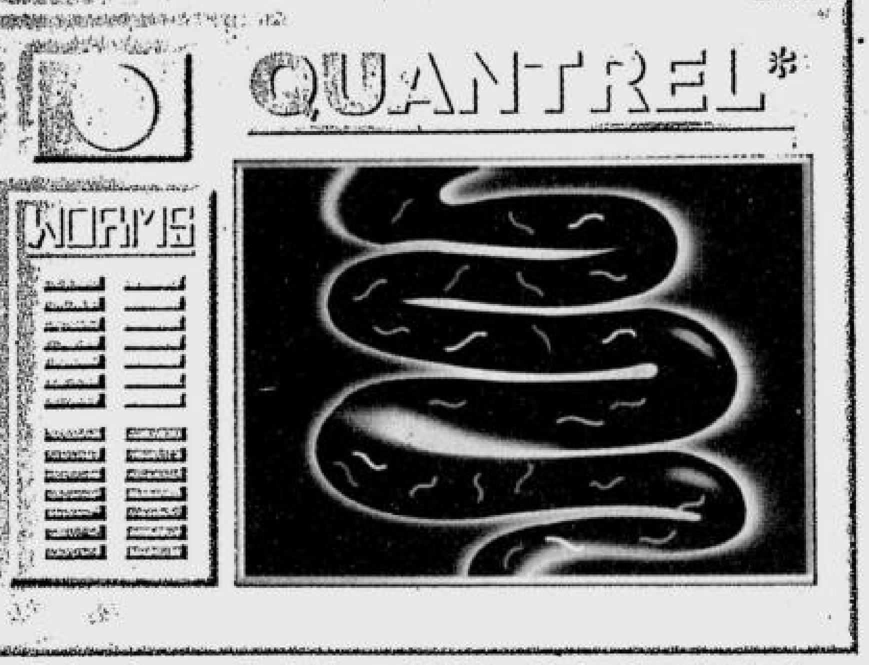

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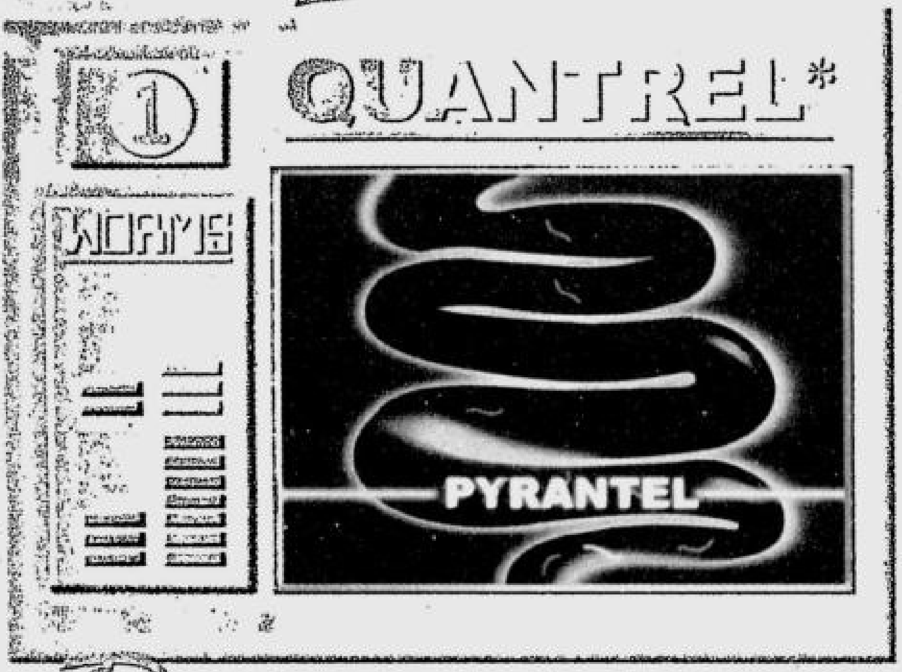

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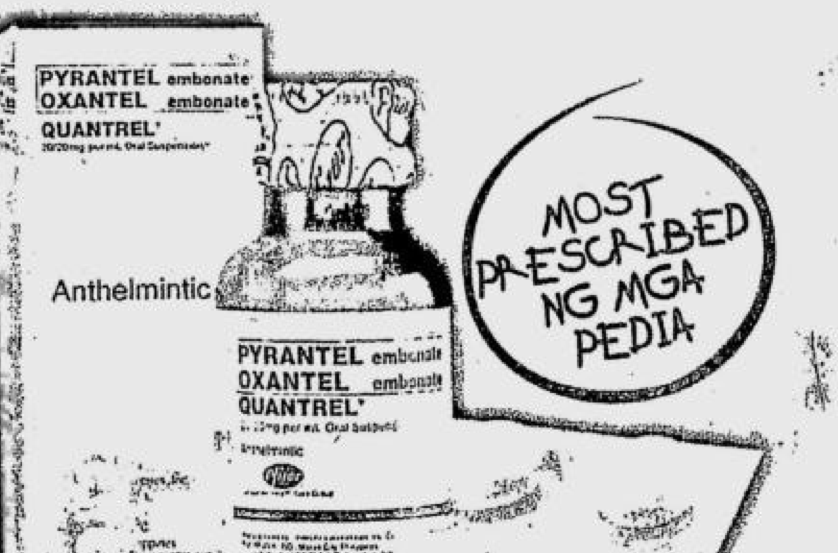

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A prayer for Fr. Joseph . . .

(From page F5)

cession. Ado Escudero leads old families of the town in this yearly event.

Restoring old St. Joseph church

FR. Amador Foz is launching his book of Ilocano verses, "Palpaliiw," on April 7 after the Holy Mass at 9 a.m. at the Discalced Carmelites Tertiary House on No. 4 Fifth St., New Manila.

Father Foz says that this is his simple way of helping raise funds for the restoration of the old church of St. Joseph in Dingras, Ilocos Norte.

Ilocanos from the North are especially invited to join and bond together in this laudable project.

The Holy Face of Jesus appears

WHEN *balikbayan* Letty Aragon visited the St. Anthony Chapel in Barrio Tangig in Laoag on Feb. 16, she saw the Holy Face of Jesus appear on the Crucifix hanging in the altar.

The Holy Face was on the stomach of the Crucified Christ and she has a picture to prove that it was not mere hallucination.

Ms Aragon, who lived in Hawaii for a time, told me that she has probably a mission to spread the devotion to the Holy Face.

In one of the promises given by the Lord Jesus Christ to Sister Marie of St. Peter in Tours, France, He said: "Nothing that you ask in making this offering will be refused to you."

For a copy of the prayer to the Holy Face, please write Letty Aragon at 633 M. Earnshaw St., Sampaloc, Manila.

Feast of St. Vincent Ferrer

EDGAR Lozano, a native of Malitbog, Southern Leyte, wrote to remind us that the feast of St. Vincent Ferrer falls on April 5. In his barrio of San Vicente is a miraculous image of the saint. Edgar's father, who is now 88 years old, told him that the image came from a *camote* fruit.

Legend reveals that the farmer was digging the ground with a stick to get the *camote* fruit. Holding it by the root, it gradually formed into the image of the saint.

Pilgrims come to the small chapel up the hill to venerate him especially on his feast day. The chapel is a kilometer away from the barrio proper.

Another miraculous image of St. Vincent Ferrer is enshrined in the church of Odiongan, Romblon. Happy feast day, St. Vincent Ferrer!

Travel Notebook
by Maurice Arcache

The art of exploring the home islands in style

It's finally here, *palanggas!* Summer is upon us and there's no better time to go exploring the sun-kissed, gorgeous tropical home islands we lovingly call the Philippines. We've got plenty of reasons to do just that - 7,100 reasons in fact, to be closer to nature as one splendid local travel poster beautifully puts it. And that's just during high tide, *dahlings*!

Moi, with a gang of international pals, at a full moon beach party.

Where to begin your Filipiniana sojourn? Try phenomenal Subic up North. You won't find a more versatile and exciting local destination than this booming free port in Zambales. Water sports lovers will certainly have their hands full with Subic's wide array of aquatic activities, from jet skiing to surfing, to scuba diving to snorkeling, even banana boating.

For the less adventurous like *moi*, try the eco-tours through Subic's lush virgin forests. To have a truly memorable vacation experience, check in at the terrific Legenda Hotel and avail of any of its splendid summer travel packages through Citibank. Rush to Legenda Hotel's reservation office and get the *tres* exclusive rate of US $75 for an overnight stay for two.

Do you prefer southern exposure? Then hie off to Palawan paradise - a hypnotic tranquil sanctuary for man and non-man right in the heart of nature's bosom. One of the last unexplored islands in the Pacific, visit Palawan and marvel at the miles upon miles of white sandy beaches, inviting you to swim in its emerald waters. Adventurous spirits can go cave exploring or follow the Monkey Trail and see the tropical flora and fauna.

To make sure you get the best Palawan rendezvous, make exclusive Club Noah your home during your vacation. Spend three days and two glorious nights for as low as US$330 for Citibank credit cardholders. Trust *moi*, you won't find a better haven in Palawan.

But if you have your heart set on foreign travel, *palanggas*, don't fret for Citibank will let you enjoy surcharge-free vacations in different parts of the globe. Go and visit the 13 travel agencies, 4 airlines and 1 cruise liner that have teamed up with Citibank. Of course, you have to pay with a Citibank credit card to get the *tres* special travel rates and earn Double Rewards Points. To make your summer trips real cool, do call 995-9999 to find out how you can avail of Citibank's fabulous PayLite Installment Plan.

It's summer. You can't do any better than to go and explore our very own beautiful islands in style, with Citibank, *naturellement!* See you around, *palanggas*.

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Treat your hair right

Healthy, shiny hair usually comes second only to vibrant skin in making one look younger. Yet, many unwittingly mistreat their hair with unhealthy styling methods and agents. Call it vanity and good grooming, a growing number of men and women have been subjecting their crowning glory to a lot of stress all for the sake of looking better or perhaps, younger.

Take those who are gifted with natural locks for instance. They can easily alter their hair's character, albeit temporarily, by a simple visit to a straightening salon. Those endowed with straight hair, meanwhile can easily have their mane permed to suit their fancy. But chemical treatments like perms and straighteners, including tints, dyes, and bleaches, can make your hair dry and brittle. If not averted, this could lead to premature hair loss.

If you are among those who have been abusing their hair without knowing it, take a cue: treat your hair right or you'll lose it prematurely. Take heed especially if you've observed that your hair loss is noticeably plentiful; if your fallen hair is shorter and much finer than normal; if you have dandruff and scaly scalp accompanied or preceeded by the thinning of hair; if your parents, grandparents or blood relations are bald; if your hair is fine, brittle or altered; and if you have entered the critical ages of 20, 30, 40 or 50 (for men) or over 35 (for women).

Premature hair loss can be very distressing. Contrary to popular notion, shampoos and conditioners are not enough to keep your hair from falling. A regular trip to the parlor may not be of much help either. The good news is: you can prolong the life span of your hair with Foltène — a revolutionary hair care treatment from Europe.

Containing a safe natural ingredient — Trichosaccharide — Foltène deeply conditions the scalp by stimulating the circulation of blood and nutrients into the hair follicles without being absorbed into the bloodstream, thus halting excessive hair loss.

Foltène is so easy to apply. After shampooing, towel dry your hair then apply Foltène directly to the scalp. Do not rinse it off and do not shampoo again for at least six hours to ensure essential contact time. Use only one vial at a time. For those with excessive falling or thinning hair, undergo the attack and maintenance phase where you apply one vial every other day for 40 days (20 vials). While in the maintenance phase, use two vials per week for two to three months. For those suffering from dandruff, dry hair, split ends and oily or dry scalp, use two vials per week for three months to ensure healthier scalp. Resume the attack or maintenance cycle as needed to maintain hair and scalp condition.

Foltène is not a cure for baldness, however. It cannot revive dead hair follicles. What it does is normalize the oily and dry areas to encourage the growth of fuller, thicker and healthier hair. After a few applications, the external appearance of hair improves in qualities — shine, softness, manageability, volume and more importantly, healthier hair without premature hair loss.

So before your hair's condition enters the irreversible stage of baldness, treat the hair you still have with Foltène. Then you can stop losing hair over hair loss.

For more inquiries, please write to:
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INFOTECH

LEO MAGNO, Editor

The day the country got hooked

BY JIM AYSON
jim@philmusic.com

(Conclusion)

SOMETIME during the first week of March, Dr. Rudy Villarica and members of the Philnet Technical Committee (Arnie del Rosario, Richie Lozada and Kelsey Hartigan-Go) sat down for a meeting at Club Filipino in San Juan with Joel Disini. Then, as now, Disini was the administrator of the top-level domain (TLD) for the Republic of the Philippines, .PH (pronounced "dot PH").

In 1989, Disini obtained an appointment from the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) to act as the .PH domain administrator. IANA was in the process of creating the first country-code TLDs and was handing them over for free on a first come, first serve basis to individuals who applied and who could prove they were technically competent. Of course, in 1989, there was hardly any interest in the Internet in the Philippines.

Philnet believed the .PH domain should be handled not by an individual, but by a foundation that was promoting the use of the Internet in the country. Besides, being backed by the Department of Science and Technology, they believed they had the authority of the Philippine government on the matter.

Villarica recalls the Club Filipino meeting: "We wanted him to turn over the administration of .PH to us. Philnet wanted to be a single point of contact for connecting to the Internet. We brought it up. We asked him to give it to us. Kelsey, Richie, Arnie were saying that the .PH domain should really belong to Philnet because we were going to provide the first full Internet access in the Philippines. Secondly, it's a foundation. And at the time there was really no money in the Internet or in domain registration. It was all free at the time and administrators were unpaid volunteers."

But it wasn't meant to be. According to Villarica, Disini's reaction was to ask, "What do I get in return?" He claimed he had invested about P50,000 to P60,000 in trips to the United States and other related expenses. Disini also said he would consider if he got direct leased-line access to Philnet. Villarica balked. "It would have jeopardized the setup," he recalls. "Giving him the leased line for free would put him on the level of the preferred partners."

Hartigan-Go recalls that it was a "very heated discussion." The talks continued virtually after the Club Filipino meeting, eventually spilling over to technical Filipino mailing lists like STACnet. In the meantime, the inability of Philnet to issue .EDU.PH domains for the universities was becoming a very real problem. If Philnet went online, e-mail addresses of the universities would need numerical Internet protocol addresses at the end instead of mean-

THE DAY/p.G2

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JIM Ayson is a pioneer in chronicling information technology and cyberspace, having written articles about the Internet in local publications as far back as March 1994, the same month the Internet was born in the Philippines. Prior to that, he was already writing about computers in local trade magazines. Jim is also the moving force behind PhilMusic.com. An archive of his written works about cyberspace can be found on the Web at http://www.bbs.org.ph/history/jra.html.

KELSEY Hartigan-Go and Richie Lozada, two of the country's Internet pioneers.

Software firm to invest more in RP

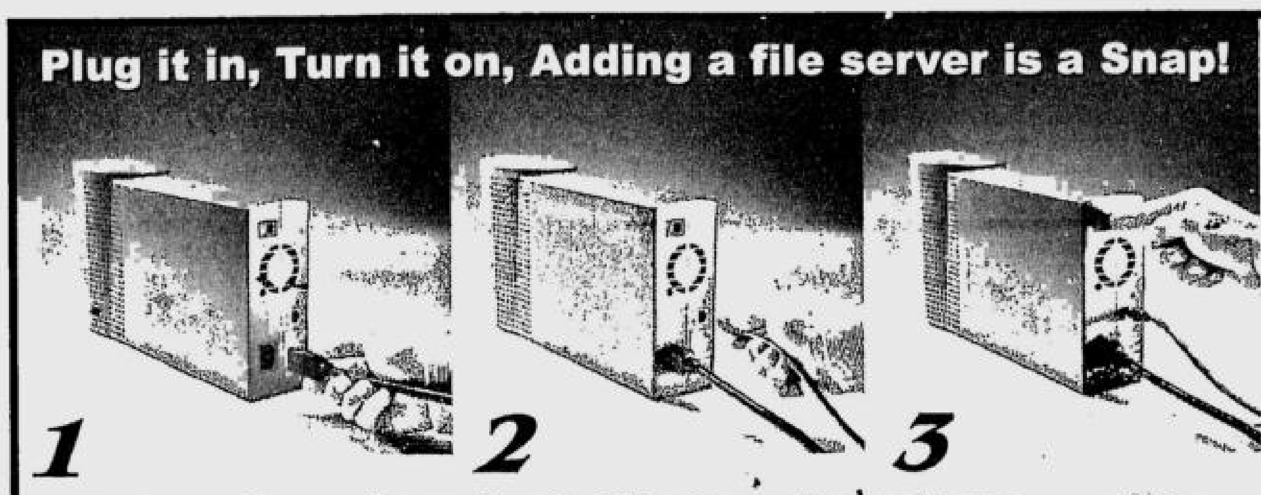
BY GERRY PLAZA

GLOBAL enterprise software provider Computer Associates (CA) has announced expansion in the Philippines as it plans to make the country its second regional hub after Singapore.

CA is set to initially invest $5 million in its local subsidiary, while earmarking $50 million for future capital infusions.

According to CA Philippines country manager Lysander Salcedo, the company has been on the lookout for investment opportunities in the Philippines and the Asia-Pacific region. He said CA has entered into 26 joint-venture partnerships with several companies.

Salcedo said he sees huge growth potential for e-business software in the financial, telecommnications and government sectors.



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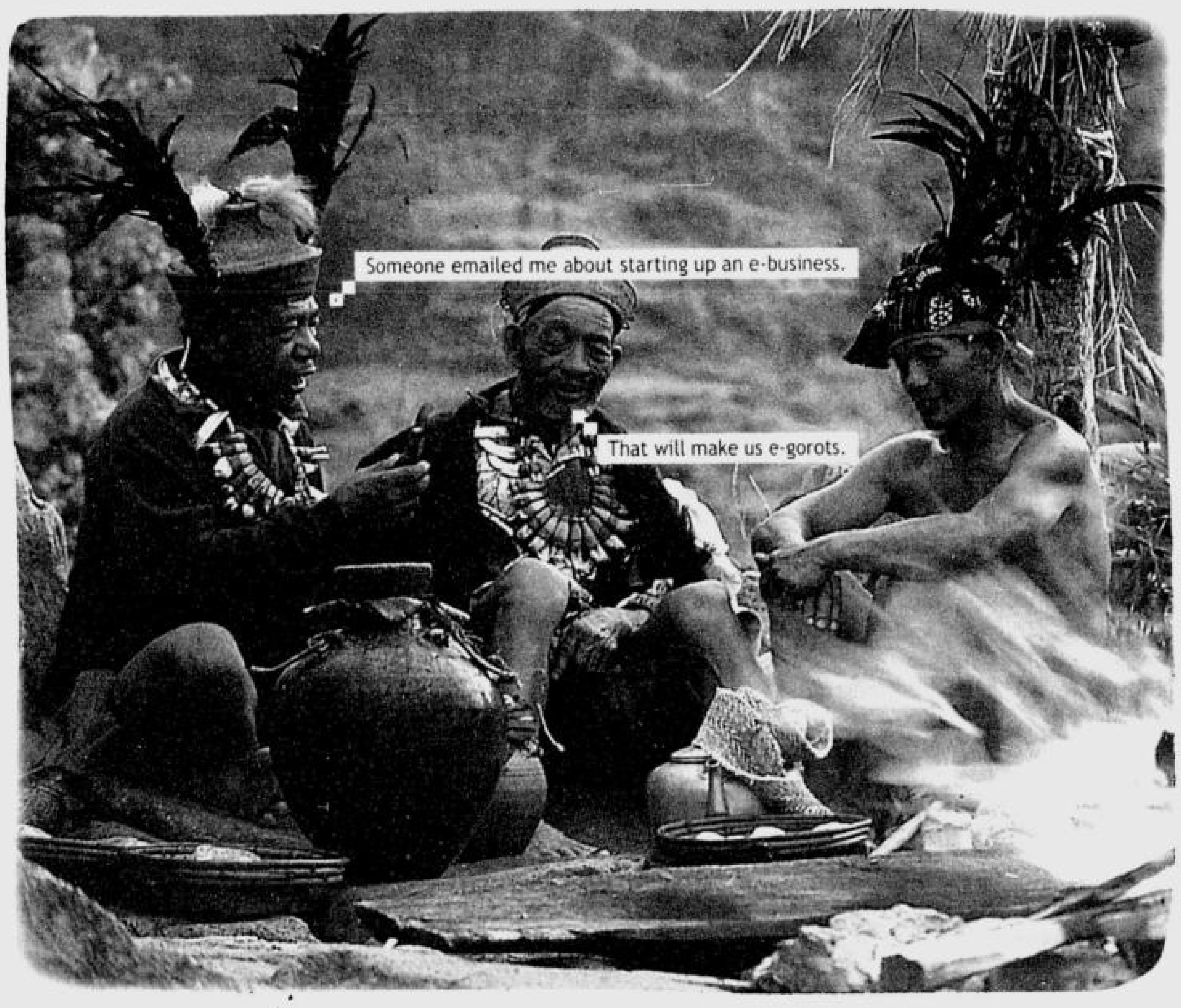
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The voice of convergence

By Joey G. Alarilla

ON THE ROAD to convergence, data should adapt to. voice, not the other way around.

This is according to Günther Binder, senior vice president for Information and Communication Networks of Siemens Inc. As a longtime leader in voice networks, Siemens is in a strong position to help local companies migrate to converged networks, Binder said.

Binder explained that despite the hype over Internet protocol, which is the platform for converged networks that support voice, data and video on a single backbone, the bottom line is that corporate and individual customers expect the same kind of reliability and availability of the regular telephone network. In an interview, he cited the example of voice over IP (VoIP). He pointed out that companies would not be impressed with this technology if it cannot be seamlessly integrated to their existing networks. Moreover, he said that VoIP calls must achieve the same quality as regular voice calls. Otherwise, clients would just pick the phone and make a normal call.

"Data has to adapt to voice with regard to quality and reliability. Most of today's IP networks are not prepared for this challenge. In most cases, if you would include voice traffic into the existing IP network, you will experience that either introducing voice will eat up the capacity, or you are not able to guarantee a certain quality of service anymore," Binder pointed out.

Binder said that Siemens is confident of winning in the convergence game because of its status as "voice champion." He admitted that Siemens initially had bet on ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) as the backbone for convergence, but has led the way in IP in response to market demands. Siemens is offering its Surpass suite of solutions to companies migrating to converged networks. While saying that Siemens remains the voice champion, Binder admitted that competition is fierce in the next-generation network arena. Asked whom he considers as Siemens' strongest competitors, Binder cited Alcatel, Nortel and Cisco.

"Alcatel as one of the 'voice champions' also has a convergence story from voice to data and voice. Alcatel has an impressive installed base in terms of ADSL (asynchronous digital subscriber line) worldwide.

Nortel's strength is in the area of photonics or optical networks, especially in the United States. Cisco is known for ATM and IP routers, two essential ingredients in next generation networks. However, as we always emphasize, Siemens has the complete product portfolio from access networks, transport, ATM and IP, fully differentiating us from competitors," Binder said.

On Feb. 22, Siemens acquired Dallas-based networking company Efficient Networks Inc. for $1.5 billion. Efficient, a broadband DSL solutions provider, offers modems and small routers in its product line.

"The initial phase of network installation is scheduled for completion in April 2001. Swisscom started in the backbone to basically lower their operational costs, by reducing the number of networks. In the future, having completed this step, it will be much easier for them to introduce new converged services into the network," Binder explained.

He reiterated that due to business imperatives, Philippine telcos will have to adopt converged networks. The initial compelling reason would be reduction of operational costs, more competition and technology innovation. Afterward, telcos and other service providers will be able to offer new value-added services through these converged networks.

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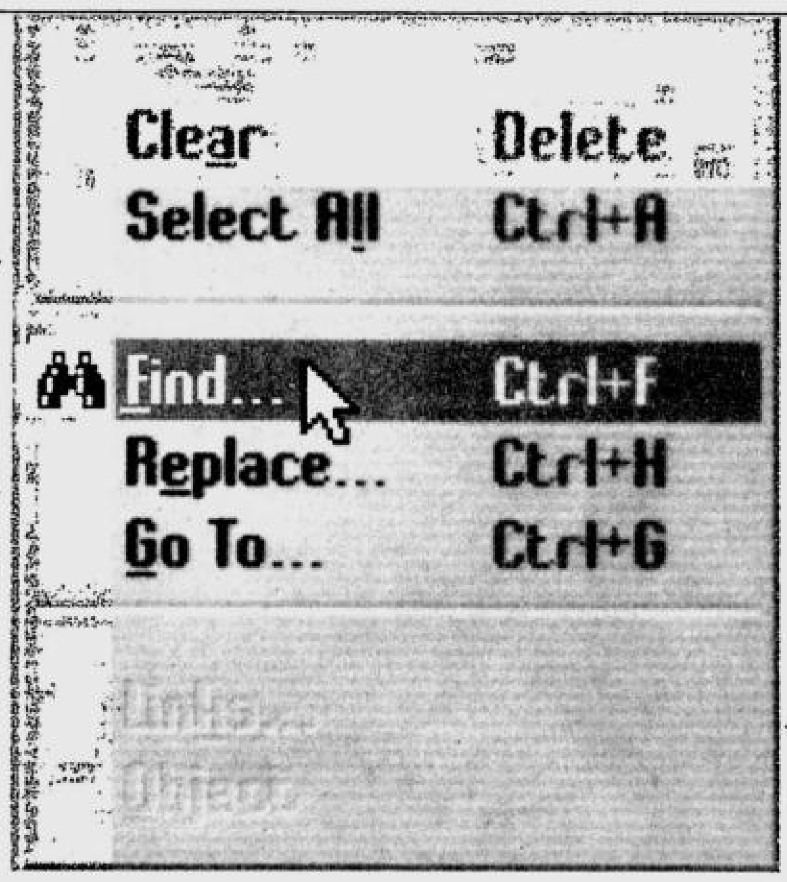

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The day . . .

(From page G1)

ingful domains. With no .PH domain, Philnet registered the domain Philnet.net with the US-based InterNIC as a contingency measure.

After a couple of board meetings, Villarica returned to Disini with an offer to reimburse him for all his expenses while administering the .PH domain, but said that Philnet could not give him free leased-line access. Disini refused. Villarica tried to appeal to his patriotism, also to no avail. "That might have been the wrong approach," he later mused.

Then Villarica tried the back door to get control of the domain. Philnet had an early supporter in the person of Dr. Steven Goldstein of the US National Science Foundation (NSF). At the time, the NSF managed much of the Internet infrastructure. Goldstein worked as a tireless evangelist of the Internet worldwide, helping various countries get their infrastructure started. He once paid a visit to Philnet in 1993 upon the DOST's request, to see if he could assist in the project.

"He was supposed to come here and teach us how to do these things," recalled Villarica. "But when he arrived, everything was already *plantsado* (complete) and he was surprised."

After talks with Disini bogged down, Villarica contacted Goldstein and asked him to assist in lobbying with IANA to reassign the .PH domain to Philnet. His e-mail went:

"Our talks with J. E. Disini, present administrator for the PH domain name have ended abruptly due to his intransigence in turning over the name to Philnet. He is demanding compensation for 'turning over' the adminstratorship to us.

"In view of your vast knowledge of Internet, could you please enlighten me as to how we could obtain the PH domain name for Philnet since our foundation has been mandated and supported by the Department of Science and Technology to set up the country-wide network for R&D and educational purposes primarily?"

Goldstein did what he could behind the scenes, but was unsuccessful. At the time, IANA placed more authority on technically savvy individuals than on governments in Internet matters. They also wanted to stay away from foreign politics and infighting, preferring that the parties work it out internally. After consulting with colleagues at the NSF, he replied in an e-mail dated March 23, 1994:

"My colleagues and I have spent much time during the past week discussing via e-mail the various sides of the "problem" which you allude to. We have also bad direct communications from Joel Disini. Mr. Disini states categorically that he will delegate a complete and appropriate subdomain(s) such as gov.ph or edu.ph to Philnet* immediately* and with no charges."

Goldstein also noted:

"As long as Mr. Disini discharges his responsibilities properly, there are no grounds for 'impeaching' him. From what he has written to the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA), it appears that he is quite ready to assign you an appropriate subdomain *instantaneously*. This will be the fastest route to getting Philnet 'on the air,' and I ask you to give it serious consideration."

Philnet would have pursued the matter further but Villarica also received around this time, a rather nasty hate mail from Randy Bush, a high-ranking pillar of the Internet community. Apparently appraised of Disini's situation, he "flamed" Villarica and the Filipino people using very strong language. That was the time Villarica and Philnet decided to drop the matter altogether. It wasn't worth the aggravation.

Despite Disini's letter to IANA, Philnet continued to wait for the .EDU.PH and .GOV.PH domains to be turned over. Philnet had to follow them up. "It took us over a month and a half to get them working at the universities," recalled Hartigan-Go.

Off to Cebu

As the end of March 1994 drew near, preparations for Dr. John Brule's "First International E-Mail Conference" at the University of San Carlos (USC) in Talamban, Cebu went into high gear. It was billed as a three-day conference, from March 27 to 29. Prior to the conference, Brule had been burning up the e-mail lines sending information about the conference using Philnet's early dial-up connections. The USC also had an alternate dialup e-mail connection via the NEC offices in Cebu, which had a dial-up linkup via Japan. There were also Fidonet BBS networks in Cebu that provided e-mail accounts to the public for a small annual fee.

Over at the STACnet mailing list, enthusiasm for the conference ran high. STACnet was an e-mail list composed of Filipino expatriates in technical fields, running off a server in a research institute in Sweden. It was started off by the Department of Foreign Affairs and centered on discussions about how overseas Filipinos could give something back to the Philippines. The E-Mail Conference in Cebu held the promise of having them "show off" Internet applications to their *kababayan* (countrymen), and a number of members from the United States and Europe made plans to attend or give talks in Cebu.

Invitations were sent to the Philnet technical committee, academics and students, prominent local cyberspace netizens, and even the early professional e-mail providers. It was suddenly "the" event of the early Philippine cyberspace community. Roberto "Obet" Verzola of the E-Mail Center, an e-mail company that catered to the nongovernment organization community, came down to give a presentation. Even Disini, who ran an e-mail service of his own, was sent an invitation, but he decided not to go.

This author also received an invitation. I was there to co-present the status of the Philippine FidoNet BBS network (a nationwide network of interconnected bulletin board systems) along with Jojo Sybico, who ran the Cebu leg of the network. Even in 1994, Cebu had an active cyberspace scene going. Sybico's organization was called C.E.B.U. (Computer Enthusiasts and BBS Users) and they were tasked to set up dial-up e-mail facilities for conference participants.

Bombim Cadiz (now the president of PHnet) was there representing Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro. He had just received his MS in Computer Science at Virginia Tech, and had returned to the Philippines to teach at Xavier. Just a few days after arriving, Bombim was on a boat to Cebu to attend the conference. He remembers that at first glance, the conference proceedings were rather ho-hum and unimpressive.

"It was probably because I had just returned from the US with an MS in Computer Science and thought that I already knew what everyone was talking about," he recalled. "I found it funny that they set up an entire conference around the E-mail concept when what I wanted to show everyone was the power of the Internet."

Even Jojo Sybico was unimpressed with the proceedings. "Personally I found the whole thing a bit geeky," he said with tongue-in-cheek humor.

But Cadiz recalls being impressed with the Philnet technical team. "I thought that the group of Admu (Ateneo de Manila University), DLSU (De La Salle University), UPD (University of the Philippines Diliman), UPLB (UP Los Baños) and others were closely knit and were really working together to bring everything up. Then, I was still an outsider, not knowing anyone. I was impressed by their enthusiasm and camaraderie." Later on, Cadiz would rise to head the PHnet foundation, which grew out of the Philnet project.

The Philnet technical committee definitely had no problem with their trip. Being such energetic young men, they spent most of their evenings after the conference sampling the vibrant Cebu nightlife.

Despite the staid conference proceedings, there was unmistakable electricity in the air. Brule and Villarica had announced that Philnet Internet link might go live during the conference, and everyone wanted to be around when it happened. Prior to the conference, Ateneo's Lozada had planed in earlier hand-carrying a Cisco 4000 router to be attached to a leased line connection provided to the USC by the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) in time for the conference. The USC router would connect to Philnet's main Cisco 7000 router at PLDT in Makati. Everything in Cebu was primed and ready. But when the connection was exactly going to happen though, was anyone's guess.

PLDT had been doing tests on the leased line to the United States for several days before the connection to US Internet provider SprintLink could be activated.

THE DAY/p.G3

The day . . .

(From page G2)

ComNet head techie Benjie Tan was assigned to activate the main router in Manila. During the conference, Villarica was getting anxious. He made regular calls to ComNet's office in Makati to follow up the connection.

Then on the evening of March 28, Benjie Tan got the word that the line was ready. He flew in straight from a training trip in Hong Kong to set up the main Cisco 7000 router at PLDT's network center at the Ramon Cojuangco Building in Makati and activate the link to Sprint.

At 1:15 am on March 29, Tan established a live Internet connection between the Philnet network and Sprint. Soon afterwards, he posted the following message on the Usenet newsgroup soc.culture.filipino:

Subject: The Philippines is in!
Date: 28 March 1994 18:03:58

As of March 29, 1994 at 1:15 a.m., RP time (unfortunately two days late due to technical difficulties), the Philippines was FINALLY connected to the Internet via SprintLink. The Philippine router, a CISCO 7000 router was attached via the services of PLDT and Sprint Comm to SprintLink's router at Stockton, CA. The gateway to the world for the Philippines will be via the NASA Ames Research Center. For now, a 64K serial link is the information highway to the rest of the Internet world.

At 5:30 am, Tan called up Villarica in Cebu, rousing him from his slumber. "Sir, it's all done," he said. "That's great! Great!" Villarica exclaimed.

Villarica put the word out to the Philnet technical committee that the connection just went live in Manila. They were to assemble at the USC early morning to activate the connection to the main router at PLDT in order to get the live Internet link going in time for the presentations that day. The conference was drawing to a close, and it needed to end with a bang.

Lozada recalls having slept in late due to hard night of partying. The team actually expected the connection to happen at a later time. They groggily woke up to the news that the link in Manila went live. "My first objective—since I came in a bit later than the rest—was to rush to San Carlos and look for an access terminal to log into the Cisco 4000. Back then you couldn't just carry notebooks—you had to rely on workstations actually connected."

Lozada logged in through a terminal located at the main auditorium at the USC where seminar proceedings were going on. The router needed to be readjusted to divert the connection from the campus local area network to the main Philnet router at PLDT. Then he had to adjust the presentation computer that was hooked up to the projector so that it could access the Internet. It was a rush job, and he was configuring settings even as people started to stream into the auditorium.

When Lozada had finished, Brule was about to commence a demonstration of live chat. Lozada informed him the connection was up. Brule nodded. He executed the chat commands to chat with his son Mark over at Syracuse. He connected. "We're in," he announced. A cheer went up from the audience. It was 10:18 a.m., March 29, 1994.

Lozada recalls an announcement went out, possibly by Villarica. "This is not a dial-up connection. This is the real thing. Our link to the Internet is finally live." People were applauding like crazy. People were thinking, finally the Internet is here, and we had live connectivity to the outside world.

Aftermath

When the Philnet technical committee got home after the conference, there was an immediate flurry of activity. At the Ateneo de Manila, Linux enthusiast Dr. Pablo Manalastas began doing what he had been waiting for weeks. He proceeded to download an entire Linux distribution from Finland. With very little activity on the new network, this went by pretty fast.

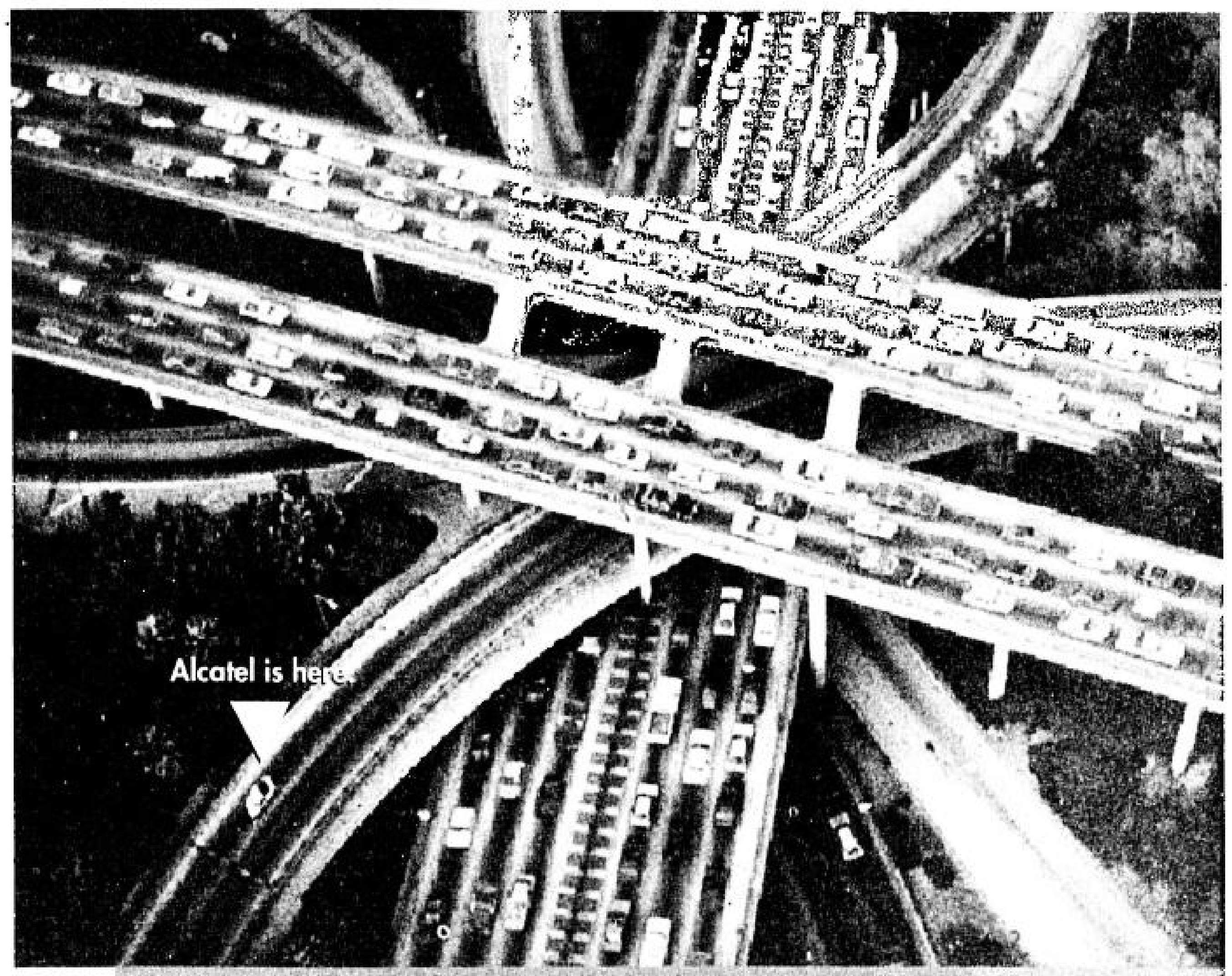
Others were swamped with requests for information. "I was answering something like 15 calls an hour from all over," recalled Hartigan-Go at DLSU. "Trying to explain what Internet is, what you need to connect, why it was expensive, from people who didn't know a monitor from a keyboard, to techies who think they know everything but had to ask anyway. That went on for a few months."

"I also had to answer a lot of e-mail queries from everywhere," he added. "Such as what's the plan for Philnet, how soon will it be nationwide, when will it reach Tugeugarao, or Davao, how to connect this school and that...how to bring Usenet and Stacnet to the rest of the Philnet community. Everybody was ecstatic, and they wanted so many things."'

It was a more innocent time, before the commercialization of the Internet as we know it today. And there was a drive to share a special kind of knowledge with everyone.

Cadiz mused about that period: "I do get nostalgic about the camaraderie shown by everyone who was involved in the Internet evangelization and the pioneering spirit. Most of all, I just find it satisfying that PHNET was able to help get the Internet into the Philippines and find all the difficulties worth it."

Lozada summed it up. "It was a pretty exciting time to be in."



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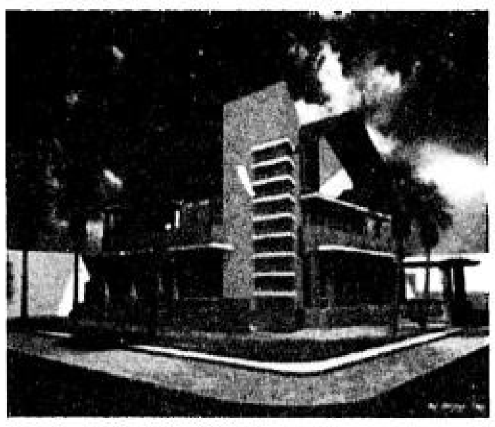

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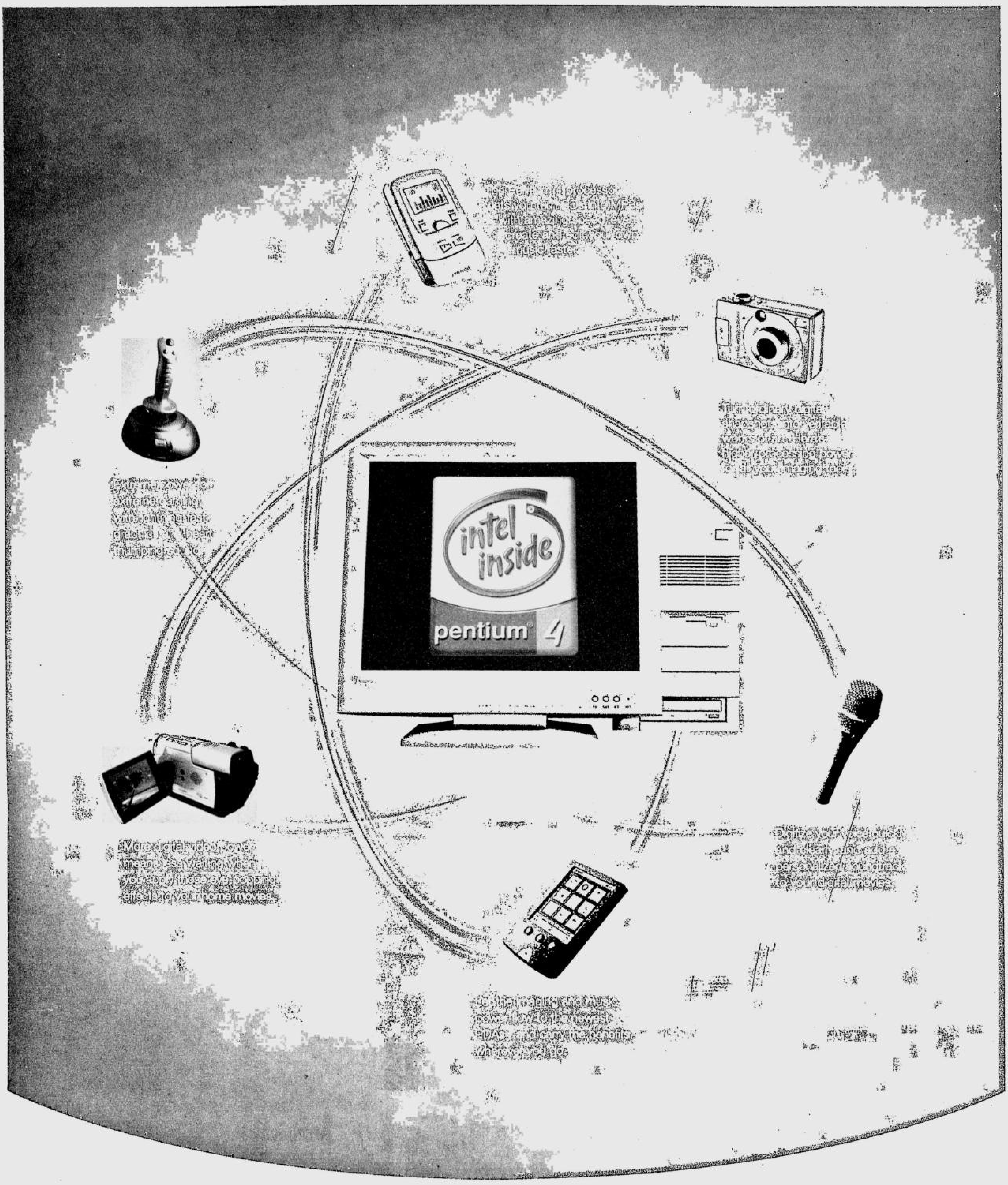

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